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THE

WORKS

OF

ALEXANDER POPE, ESQ.

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

HIMSELF AND OTHERS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A NEW LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AN ESTIMATE OF HIS

POETICAL CHARACTER AND WRITINGS,

AND OCCASIONAL REMARKS,

BY

WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE THIRD VOLUME.

Page

WINDSOR FOREST, to Lord Lansdown 1
ESSAY ON CRITICISM 37
Part I. 45
Part II. 77
Part III. 121
RAPE OF THE LOCK 157
Canto I. 169
Canto II. 180
Canto III. 188
Canto IV. 198
Canto V. 207
ELEGY to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady . 221
ODE on St. Cecilia's Day 231
TWO CHORUSES to the Tragedy of Brutus . . 243
THE DYING CHRISTIAN to his Soul 250
ELOISA TO ABELARD 253
EPISTLES 281
To Mr. Addison on his Dialogues on Medals . 283
To Robert, Earl of Oxford, prefixed to Parnelle's poems 292
To James Craggs, Esq. Secretary of State . . 295
To Mr. Jervas, with Dryden's Translation of Fresnoy 297

Page
To Mrs. Martha Blount, on her Birth-day . . 304
To the same, with the Works of Voiture . . 306
To Mrs. Teresa Blount, on leaving Town . . 310
Verses to Mr. C., St. James's Place . . . 312
PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES 313
Prologue to Mr. Addison's Tragedy of Cato . . 315
——— to Sophonisba 319
——— to a play for Mr. Dennis . . . 321
Epilogue to Mr. Rowe's Jane Shore . . . 323
MISCELLANIES 329
Lines occasioned by some Verses by the Duke of Buckingham 331
Macer, a Character 332
To Mr. John Moore, author of the celebrated Worm Powder 334
Song, by a Person of Quality 336
On a certain Lady at Court 340
On his Grotto at Twickenham 341
To Mr. Gay, who had congratulated him on finishing his house and gardens 344
Verbatim from Boileau 345
Answer to Mrs. How 346
To Mr. Thomas Southerne, on his Birth-day . 347
To Lady Mary Wortley Montagu 349
Lines sung by Durastante 351
Upon the Duke of Marlborough's House at Woodstock 352
Verses on lying in the bed where the Earl of Rochester had slept at Adderbury 353
The Challenge, a Court Ballad 354
The three gentle Shepherds 358
Epigram 359
EPITAPHS 361
I. On Charles, Earl of Dorset 363

Page

II. On Sir William Trumbal 365
III. On the Hon. Simon Harcourt . . . 366
IV. On James Craggs, Esq. 367
V. On Mr. Rowe 369
VI. On Mrs. Corbet 370
VII. On the Hon. Robert Digby, and his sister Mary 371
VIII. On Sir Godfrey Kneller 373
IX. On General Henry Withers 375
X. On Mr. Elijah Fenton 376
XI. On Mr. Gay 377
XII. Intended for Sir Isaac Newton . . . 378
XIII. On Dr. Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester 379
XIV. On Edmund, Duke of Buckingham . . 381
XV. For one who would not be buried in Westminster Abbey 382

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WINDSOR-FOREST:

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE LORD LANSDOWN.

Non injussa cano: Te nostræ, *Vare*, myricæ,
Te *Nemus* omne canet; nec Phœbo gratior ulla est,
Quam sibi quæ *Vari* præscripsit pagina nomen. Virg.

THE design of Windsor-forest is evidently derived from *Coopers-hill*, with some attention to Waller's poem on the *Park;* but Pope cannot be denied to excel his masters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging description, narration, and morality. The objection made by Dennis is the want of plan, of a regular subordination of parts, terminating in the principal and original design. There is this want in most descriptive poems; because as the scenes, which they must exhibit successively, are all subsisting at the same time, the order in which they are shewn must, by necessity, be arbitrary, and more is not to be expected from the last part than from the first. The attention therefore, which cannot be detained by suspence, must be excited by diversity, such as this poem offers to its reader.

But the desire of diversity may be too much indulged. The parts of Windsor-forest which deserve least praise, are those which were added to enliven the stillness of the scene; the appearance of Father Thames, and the transformation of Lodona. Addison had, in his Campaign, derided the rivers, that "rise from their oozy beds" to tell stories of heroes, and it is therefore strange that Pope should adopt a fiction not only unnatural, but lately censured. The story of Lodona is told with sweetness; but a new metamorphosis is a ready and puerile expedient. Nothing is easier than to tell how a flower was once a blooming virgin, or a rock an obdurate tyrant. *Johnson.*

The poem of *Windsor-forest,* although properly ranked as descriptive, contains in itself strong indications that the powers of the author were calculated for more elevated subjects and loftier flights. No sooner has he announced the scene of his poem, than he breaks through the narrow bounds by which he is apparently confined, and engages in an historical deduction of the effects produced by the tyranny of our early kings; terminating in the establishment of liberty, and the diffusion of national happiness. To this subject he recurs towards the close of his poem, where he brings down his historical notices to the reign of Queen Ann, and celebrates the peace of Utrecht, then just concluded. Many other passages indicate the attention he had paid to graver and more

important subjects, which soon superseded his lighter performances, and shewed,

> That not in fancy's maze he wander'd long,
> But stoop'd to truth and moralized his song.

The observations of Dr. Johnson, on the personification of Father Thames, and on the story of Lodona would, if assented to, deprive poetry of one of her chief auxiliaries. That such representations are unnatural must, in a strict sense, be allowed; but poetry employs for her purpose not only what exists in nature, but what may, in possibility, be supposed to exist; and to deprive her of this power, is to prohibit her flights altogether. Neither Caliban nor Ariel exist in nature, and in Johnson's phraseology may therefore be said to be unnatural; but although not in nature, they are not contradictory to our conceptions of what might exist; and it is in effecting this verisimilitude that the art of the poet consists. To restrain poetry to what is strictly natural, is to reduce it essentially to prose.

It has been said that the conclusion of this poem gave great pain to Addison, both as a poet and a politician; on which Johnson (in his Life of Pope) asks, "why Addison should receive any particular disturbance from the last lines of Windsor-forest?" To which it may be answered, that Addison could scarcely fail to be mortified on finding such splendid talents engaged in the cause of a party in direct opposition to his own, and employed to celebrate a peace, which, in his opinion, was not only inconsistent with the honour and interests of his country, but injurious to the liberty and safety of Europe in general.

WINDSOR-FOREST.*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE LORD LANSDOWN.†

THY forest, Windsor! and thy green retreats,
At once the Monarch's and the Muse's seats,
Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan maids!
Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.

NOTES.

* This Poem was written at two different times: the first part of it, which relates to the country, in the year 1704, at the same time with the Pastorals; the latter part was not added till the year 1713, in which it was published. *P.*

† Notwithstanding the many praises lavished on this celebrated nobleman as a poet, by Dryden, by Addison, by Bolingbroke, by our Author, and others, yet candid criticism must oblige us to confess, that he was but a feeble imitator of the feeblest parts of Waller. In his tragedy of Heroic Love, he seems not to have had a true relish for Homer whom he copied; and in the British Enchanters, very little fancy is to be found in a subject fruitful of romantic imagery. It was fortunate for him, says Mr. Walpole, in his Anecdotes, that in an age when persecution raged so fiercely against lukewarm authors, that he had an intimacy with the Inquisitor General; how else would such lines as these escape the Bathos; they are in his Heroic Love:

——Why thy Gods
Enlighten thee to speak their *dark* decrees.

His

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 3, &c. Originally thus (and indeed much better):

Chaste Goddess of the woods,
Nymphs of the vales, and Naïads of the floods,
Lead me through arching bow'rs, and glimm'ring glades,
Unlock your springs— *P.*

GRANVILLE commands; your aid, O Muses, bring!
What Muse for GRANVILLE can refuse to sing?
The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in description, and look green in song:
These, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame. 10

NOTES.

His Progress of Beauty, and his Essay on Unnatural Flights in Poetry, seem to be the best of his pieces; in the latter are many good critical remarks and precepts, and it is accompanied with notes that contain much agreeable instruction. For it may be added, his prose is better than his verse. Witness a Letter to a Young Man on his taking Orders, his Observations on Burnet, and his Defence of his relation Sir Richard Grenville, and a Translation of some parts of Demosthenes, and a Letter to his Father on the Revolution, written in October 1688. After having been Secretary at War 1710, Controller and Treasurer to the Household, and of her Majesty's Privy Council, and created a Peer 1711, he was seized as a suspected person, at the accession of King George the First, and confined in the Tower, in the very chamber that had before been occupied by Sir Robert Walpole. But whatever may be thought of Lord Lansdown as a poet, his character as a man was highly valuable. His conversation was most pleasing and polite; his affability, and universal benevolence and gentleness, captivating; he was a firm friend, and a sincere lover of his country. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 6. " neget quis carmina Gallo?" VIRG.

REMARKS.

Ver. 7. Allusion to Milton's Paradise Lost. *Warton.*

Ver. 8. *Live in description,*] Evidently suggested by Waller:

" Of the first Paradise *there's nothing found,*
Yet the *description* lasts; who knows the fate
Of lives that shall this Paradise relate?
Instead of rivers rolling by the side
Of *Eden's garden,*" &c. *Bowles.*

Ver. 9. *inspir'd with equal flame,*] That is (as I understand it), if the Poet were inspired with Milton's poetical flame, then *these* groves,

Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
Here earth and water seem to strive again;
Not Chaos-like together crush'd and bruis'd,
But, as the world, harmoniously confus'd:
Where order in variety we see,
And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.
Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,
And part admit, and part exclude the day;
As some coy nymph her lover's warm address
Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.
There, interspers'd in lawns, and op'ning glades,
Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.
Here in full light the russet plains extend:
There wrapt in clouds the blueish hills ascend.

NOTES.

Ver. 15.] Evidently from Cooper's Hill:

" Such was the discord which did first disperse
Form, order, beauty, thro' the universe," *Warton.*

Ver. 19.] It is a false thought, and gives, as it were, sentiment to the groves. *Warton.*

Which it is the very object of Poetry to do. Mr. Wakefield's remark on this passage is perhaps more judicious, and is expressed with becoming delicacy. " There is a levity in this comparison which appears to me unseasonable, and but ill according with the serene dignity of the subject; but as the youthful poet omitted, with great judgment, the luxuriancies of his youthful imagination in future revisals of his works, and has retained this passage, I am very diffident of dissent from him in such cases."

REMARKS.

groves, which resemble the groves of Eden, and which, though *vanish'd*, revive in his song—these groves (of Windsor) should be like in *fame*, as in *beauty*. Dr. Warton thinks there is an inconsistency, but I must confess I do not perceive it; at least, I think there is no expression here used but such as is fairly allowable in Poetry. *Bowles.*

Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,
And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
That crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,
Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.
Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
The weeping amber, or the balmy tree,
While by our oaks the precious loads are born,
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.
Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,
Tho' Gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,
Than what more humble mountains offer here,
Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear.
See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd,
Here blushing Flora paints th' enamell'd ground,

NOTES.

Ver. 33. *Not proud Olympus, &c.*] Sir J. Denham, in his Cooper's Hill, had said,

" Than which a nobler weight no mountain bears,
But Atlas only, which supports the spheres."

The comparison is childish, as the taking it from fabulous history destroys the compliment. Our Poet has shewn more judgment; he has made as manly use of as fabulous a circumstance by the artful application of the mythology.

" Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear," &c. Making the nobility of the hills of Windsor-Forest to consist in supporting the inhabitants in plenty. *Warburton.*

This appears an idle play on the word " supporting." *Warton.*

Ver. 37. The word *crown'd* is exceptionable; it makes Pan crowned with flocks. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 25. Originally thus:

Why should I sing our better suns or air,
Whose vital draughts prevent the leach's care,
While through fresh fields th' enliv'ning odours breathe,
Or spread with vernal blooms the purple heath? *P.*

Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;
Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,
And peace and plenty tell, a STUART reigns.
Not thus the land appear'd in ages past,
A dreary desert, and a gloomy waste,
To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,
And kings more furious and severe than they;
Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and floods,
The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:
Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and caves,
(For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves,)
What could be free, when lawless beasts obey'd,
And ev'n the elements a Tyrant sway'd?
In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain,
Soft show'rs distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain;
The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,
And famish'd dies amidst his ripen'd fields.
What wonder then, a beast or subject slain
Were equal crimes in a despotic reign?

NOTES.

Ver. 45. *savage laws*] The Forest Laws. See the account of them in Blackstone's excellent Lectures; the killing a deer, boar, or hare, was punished with the loss of the delinquent's eyes.
Warton.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 49. Originally thus in the MS.

From towns laid waste, to dens and caves they ran
(For who first stoop'd to be a slave was man).

Ver. 57, &c.

No wonder savages or subjects slain—
But subjects starv'd, while savages were fed.

It was originally thus, but the word "savages" is not properly applied to beasts, but to men; which occasioned the alteration. *P.*

Both doom'd alike, for sportive Tyrants bled,
But while the subject starv'd, the beast was fed.
Proud Nimrod first the bloody chace began,
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man:
Our haughty Norman boasts that barb'rous name,
And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.
The fields are ravish'd from th' industrious swains,
From men their cities, and from Gods their fanes:
The levell'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;
The hollow winds through naked temples roar;
Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;
O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;

NOTES.

Ver. 65. *The fields are ravish'd, &c.*] Alluding to the destruction made in the New Forest, and the tyrannies exercised there by William I. *P.*

I have the authority of three or four of our best antiquarians to say, that the common tradition of villages and parishes, within the compass of thirty miles, being destroyed, in the New Forest, is absolutely groundless, no traces or vestiges of such being to be discovered, nor any other parish named in Doomsday Book, but what now remains. Of late years, some minute enquiries have been made on this subject, by accurate and well-informed judges, who are clearly of this opinion. The President Hainault has given us a more amiable idea of our Norman Conqueror than is here exhibited. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 65. *The fields are ravish'd from th' industrious swains,*
From men their cities, and from Gods their fanes:]
Translated from

" Templa adimit divis, fora civibus, arva colonis,"

an old monkish writer, I forget who. *P.*

In Camden's Britannia, first edition, in the account of Somersetshire, it is said of Edgar,

" Templa Deo, Templis Monachos, Monachis dedit agros."

Warton.

The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.
Aw'd by his Nobles, by his Commons curst,
Th' Oppressor rul'd tyrannic where he durst,
Stretch'd o'er the Poor and Church his iron rod,
And serv'd alike his Vassals and his God.
Whom ev'n the Saxon spar'd, and bloody Dane,
The wanton victims of his sport remain.
But see, the man, who spacious regions gave
A waste for beasts, himself deny'd a grave!

NOTES.

Ver. 74.] A fine remain of ancient art and ancient customs, a piece of tapestry, said to be the work of Queen Matilda, is annually exhibited in the cathedral church of Bayeux, in Normandy, representing the expedition of William the Conqueror, and containing a most minute picture of every part of that event, from his landing in England to the battle of Hastings. An engraving of it is given in the tenth volume of the Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres. *Warton.*

Ver. 80.] In St. Foix's entertaining historical Essays on Paris, it is related, p. 95, tom. 5, that just as the body of William I. was going to be put into the grave, a voice cried aloud, " I forbid his interment. When William was only Duke of Normandy, he seized this piece of Land from my father, on which he built this abbey of St. Stephen, without making me a recompence, which I now demand." Prince Henry, who was present, called out the man, who was only a common farrier, and agreed to give him an hundred crowns for this burial-place. Except the former conquest of England by the Saxons, (says Hume, vol. 1.) who were induced, by peculiar circumstances, to proceed even to the extermination of the natives, it would be difficult to find in all history, a revolution

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 72. *And wolves with howling fill, &c.*]
The author thought this an error, wolves not being common in England at the time of the Conqueror. *P.*

Stretch'd on the lawn his second hope survey,
At once the chaser, and at once the prey:
Lo Rufus, tugging at the deadly dart,
Bleeds in the forest like a wounded hart.
Succeeding monarchs heard the subjects' cries,
Nor saw displeas'd the peaceful cottage rise:
Then gath'ring flocks on unknown mountains fed,
O'er sandy wilds were yellow harvests spread,
The forest wonder'd at th' unusual grain,
And secret transports touch'd the conscious swain.

NOTES.

a revolution more destructive, or attended with a more complete subjection of the ancient inhabitants. *Warton.*

The circumstance of William's laying waste so much territory is very doubtful. I believe the fact can be disproved. *Bowles.*

Ver. 81. *second hope.*] Richard, second son of William the Conqueror. *Warburton.*

Ver. 83.] The moment Walter Tyrrel had shot him, without speaking of the accident, he instantly hastened to the sea-shore and embarked for France, and from thence hurried to Jerusalem to do penance for his involuntary crime. The body of Rufus was found in the forest by a countryman, whose family are still said to be living near the spot, and was buried, without any pomp, before the altar of Winchester cathedral, where the monument still remains. Though the Monkish historians, who hated him, may perhaps have exaggerated his vices, yet he seems really to have been a violent, prodigal, proud, perfidious, ungenerous, and tyrannical prince. There was however something of magnificence in his building the Tower, Westminster-hall, and London-bridge. *Warton.*

The oak, under which Rufus was shot, was standing till within these few years. *Bowles.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 89. "Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma." Virg.

Fair Liberty, Britannia's Goddess, rears,
Her chearful head, and leads the golden years.
Ye vig'rous swains! while youth ferments your blood,
And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood,
Now range the hills, the gameful woods beset,
Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.
When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,
And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,
Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,
Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;
But when the tainted gales the game betray,
Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey;
Secure they trust th' unfaithful field beset,
'Till hov'ring o'er them sweeps the swelling net.
Thus (if small things we may with great compare)
When Albion sends her eager sons to war,
Some thoughtless Town, with ease and plenty blest,
Near, and more near, the closing lines invest;

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 91.

O may no more a foreign master's rage,
With wrongs yet legal, curse a future age!
Still spread, fair Liberty! thy heav'nly wings,
Breathe plenty on the fields, and fragrance on the springs. *P.*

Ver. 97.

When yellow autumn summer's heat succeeds,
And into wine the purple harvest bleeds,[1]
The partridge feeding in the new-shorn fields,
Both morning sports and ev'ning pleasures yields.

[1] Perhaps the Author thought it not allowable to describe the season by a circumstance not proper to our climate, the vintage. *P.*

Sudden they seize th' amaz'd, defenceless prize,
And high in air Britannia's standard flies.
See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:
Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground.
Ah! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?
Nor yet, when moist Arcturus clouds the sky,
The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny.
To plains with well-breath'd beagles we repair,
And trace the mazes of the circling hare:
(Beasts, urg'd by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,
And learn of man each other to undo.)
With slaught'ring guns th' unweary'd fowler roves,
When frosts have whiten'd all the naked groves;
Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,
And lonely woodcocks haunt the wat'ry glade.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 107. It stood thus in the first Editions:

Pleas'd in the Gen'ral's sight, the host lie down
Sudden before some unsuspecting town;
The young, the old, one instant makes our prize,
And o'er their captive heads Britannia's standard flies.

Ver. 126. O'er rustling leaves around the naked groves.
This is a better line. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 115. " nec te tua plurima, Pantheu,
Labentem pietas, vel Apollinis insula texit." Virg.
Warburton.

He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;
Straight a short thunder breaks the frozen sky:
Oft, as in airy rings they skim the heath,
The clam'rous lapwings feel the leaden death:
Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
They fall, and leave their little lives in air.

In genial spring, beneath the quiv'ring shade,
Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
The patient fisher takes his silent stand,
Intent, his angle trembling in his hand:
With looks unmov'd, he hopes the scaly breed,
And eyes the dancing cork, and bending reed.
Our plenteous streams a various race supply,
The bright-ey'd perch with fins of Tyrian dye,
The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,
The yellow carp, in scales bedropp'd with gold,
Swift trouts, diversify'd with crimson stains,
And pikes, the tyrants of the wat'ry plains.

Now Cancer glows with Phœbus' fiery car:
The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,
Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,
Rouze the fleet hart, and cheer the opening hound.
Th' impatient courser pants in ev'ry vein,
And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain:

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 129. The fowler lifts his levell'd tube on high. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 134. " Præcipites alta vitam sub nube relinquunt." Virg.

Ver. 151. *Th' impatient courser, &c.*] Translated from Statius,

" Stare adeo miserum est, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum."

These lines Mr. Dryden, in his preface to his translation of Fresnoy's

Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.
See the bold youth strain up the threat'ning steep,
Rush through the thickets, down the valleys sweep,
Hang o'er their coursers' heads with eager speed,
And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.
Let old Arcadia boast her ample plain,
Th' immortal huntress, and her virgin-train;
Nor envy, Windsor! since thy shades have seen
As bright a Goddess, and as chaste a Queen;
Whose care, like hers, protects the sylvan reign,
The Earth's fair light, and Empress of the Main.
Here too, 'tis sung, of old Diana stray'd,
And Cynthus' top forsook for Windsor shade;
Here was she seen o'er airy wastes to rove,
Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless grove;
Here arm'd with silver bows, in early dawn,
Her buskin'd Virgins trac'd the dewy lawn.
Above the rest a rural nymph was fam'd,
Thy offspring, Thames! the fair Lodona nam'd;

NOTES.

Ver. 171. Dr. Johnson seems to have past too severe a censure on this episode of *Lodona*. A tale in a descriptive poet has certainly a good effect. See Thomson's *Lavinia*, and the many beautiful tales interwoven in *the loves of the Plants*. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

noy's Art of Painting, calls *wonderfully fine*, and says, " they would cost him an hour, if he had the leisure, to translate them, there is so much of beauty in the original;" which was the reason, I suppose, why Mr. P. tried his strength with them. *Warburton.*

Ver. 158. *And earth rolls back,*] He has improved his original, " terræque urbesque recedunt." Virg. *Warburton.*

But no imitation of Virgil was here intended. *Warton.*

(Lodona's fate, in long oblivion cast,
The Muse shall sing, and what she sings shall last.)
Scarce could the Goddess from her nymph be known,
But by the crescent and the golden zone.
She scorn'd the praise of beauty, and the care;
A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair;
A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,
And with her dart the flying deer she wounds.
It chanc'd, as eager of the chace, the maid
Beyond the forest's verdant limits stray'd,
Pan saw and lov'd, and burning with desire
Pursu'd her flight, her flight increas'd his fire.
Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly,
When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky;
Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,
When through the clouds he drives the trembling doves;
As from the God she flew with furious pace,
Or as the God, more furious urg'd the chace.

NOTES.

Ver. 179.] From the fourth book of Virgil, who copied it from Homer's beautiful figure of Apollo, Iliad, b. i. ver. 46. But, as Dr. Clark finely and acutely observes, even Virgil has lost the beauty and the propriety of the original. Homer says, the arrows sounded in the quiver because the step of the God was hasty and irregular, as of an angry person. Irati describitur incessus, paulo utique inæquabilior. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 175.

" Nec positu variare comas; ubi fibula vestem,
Vitta coërcuerat neglectos alba capillos." Ovid.

Ver. 185, 188.

" Ut fugere accipitrem penna trepidante columbæ,
Ut solet accipiter trepidas agitare columbas." Ovid.

Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears;
Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears;
And now his shadow reach'd her as she run,
His shadow lengthen'd by the setting sun;
And now his shorter breath, with sultry air,
Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.
In vain on father Thames she calls for aid,
Nor could Diana help her injur'd maid.
Faint, breathless, thus she pray'd, nor pray'd in vain;
" Ah Cynthia! ah—tho' banish'd from thy train,
" Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,
" My native shades—there weep, and murmur there."
She said, and melting as in tears she lay,
In a soft, silver stream dissolv'd away.
The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps,
For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps;
Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,
And bathes the forest where she rang'd before.
In her chaste current oft the Goddess laves,
And with celestial tears augments the waves.
Oft in her glass the musing shepherd spies
The headlong mountains and the downward skies.

NOTES.

Ver. 207. *Still bears the name*] The River Lodon.

Ver. 211. *Oft in her glass, &c.*] These six lines were added after the first writing of this poem. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 193, 196.

" Sol erat a tergo: vidi præcedere longam
Ante pedes umbram; nisi si timor illa videbat.
Sed certe sonituque pedum terrebar; et ingens
Crinales vittas afflabat anhelitus oris."

Most of the circumstances in this tale are from Ovid.

The wat'ry landskip of the pendant woods,
And absent trees that tremble in the floods;
In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen,
And floating forests paint the waves with green,
Through the fair scene roll slow the ling'ring streams,
Then foaming pour along, and rush into the Thames.

Thou, too, great father of the British floods!
With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods;
Where tow'ring oaks their growing honours rear,
And future navies on thy shores appear.
Not Neptune's self from all her streams receives
A wealthier tribute than to thine he gives.
No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.
Nor Po so swells the fabling Poet's lays,
While led along the skies his current strays,
As thine, which visits Windsor's fam'd abodes,
To grace the mansion of our earthly Gods:
Nor all his stars above a lustre show,
Like the bright beauties on thy banks below;
Where Jove, subdu'd by mortal passion still,
Might change Olympus for a nobler hill.

Happy the man whom this bright Court approves,
His Sov'reign favours, and his country loves:

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 233. It stood thus in the MS.

And force great Jove, if Jove's a lover still,
To change Olympus, &c.

Ver. 235.

Happy the man, who to these shades retires,
But doubly happy, if the Muse inspires!

Happy next him, who to these shades retires,
Whom Nature charms, and whom the Muse inspires:
Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,
Successive study, exercise, and ease.
He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,
And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields:
With chemic art exalts the min'ral pow'rs,
And draws the aromatic souls of flow'rs:
Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high;
O'er figur'd worlds now travels with his eye;
Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,
Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er:
Or wand'ring thoughtful in the silent wood,
Attends the duties of the wise and good,
T' observe a mean, be to himself a friend,
To follow nature, and regard his end;
Or looks on heav'n with more than mortal eyes,
Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,
Amid her kindred stars familiar roam,
Survey the region, and confess her home!

NOTES.

Ver. 251. *T' observe a mean*] This is marked as an imitation of Lucretius in the first, and all editions of Warburton; but erroneously: the passage is in the second book of Lucan, v. 381. *Warton.*

The passage alluded to is:

"—— Servare modum, finemque tenere,
Naturamque sequi," &c. *Bowles.*

VARIATIONS.

Blest whom the sweets of home-felt quiet please;
But far more blest, who study joins with ease. *P.*

Such was the life great Scipio once admir'd,
Thus Atticus, and TRUMBAL thus retir'd.
Ye sacred Nine! that all my soul possess,
Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions bless,
Bear me, oh bear me to sequester'd scenes,
The bow'ry mazes, and surrounding greens:
To Thames's banks which fragrant breezes fill,
Or where ye Muses sport on COOPER'S HILL.
(On COOPER'S HILL eternal wreaths shall grow
While lasts the mountain, or while Thames shall flow)
I seem through consecrated walks to rove,
I hear soft music die along the grove:
Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,
By god-like Poets venerable made:

NOTES.

Ver. 263.] Denham, says Dr. Johnson, seems to have been, at least among us, the author of a species of composition that may be denominated *Local Poetry*, of which the fundamental subject is some particular landscape, to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection, or incidental meditation. Cooper's Hill, if it be maliciously inspected, will not be found without its faults; the digressions are too long, the morality too frequent, and the sentiments such as will not bear a rigorous inquiry. It was first printed at Oxford, in 1633. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 267. It stood thus in the MS.

Methinks around your holy scenes I rove,
And hear your music echoing through the grove:
With transport visit each inspiring shade,
By god-like Poets venerable made.

Here his first lays majestic DENHAM sung;
There the last numbers flow'd from COWLEY'S tongue.
O early lost! what tears the river shed,
When the sad pomp along his banks was led?
His drooping swans on ev'ry note expire,
And on his willows hung each Muse's lyre.

NOTES.

Ver. 271. *majestic Denham*] Pope, by the expression of "majestic," has justly characterized the flow of Denham's couplets. It is extraordinary that Pope, who by this expression seems to have appreciated the general cast of harmony in Cooper's Hill, should have made his own cadences so regular and almost unvaried. Denham's couplets are often irregular, but the effect of the pauses in the following lines was obviously the result of a fine ear. The language truly suits the subject.

But his proud head the airy mountain hides
Among the clouds; his shoulders and his sides
A shady mantle clothes; his curled brows
Frown on the gentle stream, which calmly flows,
Whilst winds and storms his lofty forehead beat! *Bowles.*

Ver. 272. *There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.*] Mr. Cowley died at Chertsey on the borders of the Forest, and was from thence conveyed to Westminster. *P.*

Disgusted with the business and bustle of the world, and the intrigues of courts, Cowley thought to have found an exemption of all cares in retiring to Chertsey. Dr. Johnson wrote a Rambler to ridicule his wish to retire to America, and has published a Letter, vol. i. of his Lives, p. 29, which he recommends to the perusal of all who pant for solitude. His house at Chertsey now belongs to Mr. Alderman Clarke. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 275.

What sighs, what murmurs, fill'd the vocal shore!
His tuneful swans were heard to sing no more. *P.*

Since fate relentless stopp'd their heav'nly voice,
No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;
Who now shall charm the shades, where COWLEY strung
His living harp, and lofty DENHAM sung?
But hark! the groves rejoice, the forest rings!
Are these reviv'd? or is it GRANVILLE sings!
'Tis yours, my Lord, to bless our soft retreats,
And call the Muses to their ancient seats;
To paint anew the flow'ry sylvan scenes,
To crown the forests with immortal greens,
Make Windsor-hills in lofty numbers rise,
And lift her turrets nearer to the skies;
To sing those honours you deserve to wear,
And add new lustre to her silver star.
Here noble SURREY felt the sacred rage,
SURREY, the GRANVILLE of a former age:

NOTES.

Ver. 282.] The Mira of Granville was the Countess of Newburgh. Towards the end of her life Dr. King, of Oxford, wrote a very severe satire against her, in three books, 4to, called The Toast. *Warton.*

Ver. 291. *Here noble Surrey.*] Henry Howard Earl of Surrey, one of the first refiners of the English poetry; who flourish'd in the time of Henry VIII. *P.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 290. *her silver star.*] All the lines that follow were not added to the poem till the year 1710. What immediately followed this, and made the conclusion, were these;

My humble Muse in unambitious strains
Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains;
Where I obscurely pass my careless days,
Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise,
Enough for me that to the list'ning swains
First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains. *P.*

Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:
In the same shades the Cupids tun'd his lyre,
To the same notes, of love, and soft desire:
Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,
Then fill'd the groves, as heav'nly Mira now.
Oh would'st thou sing what heroes Windsor bore,
What kings first breath'd upon her winding shore,
Or raise old warriors, whose ador'd remains
In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!
With Edward's acts adorn the shining page,
Stretch his long triumphs down through ev'ry age,

NOTES.

Ver. 297. *Fair Geraldine,*] "The Fair Geraldine, (says Mr. Warton in his Hist. of English Poetry, vol. iii.) the general object of Lord Surrey's passionate sonnets, is commonly said to have lived at Florence, and to have been of the family of the Geraldi of that city. This is a misapprehension of an expression in one of our poet's odes, and a passage in Drayton's Heroic Epistles. She was, undoubtedly, one of the daughters of Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare.

In the History of English Poetry, vol. iii. p. 12. is a poem of the elegiac kind, in which he laments his imprisonment in Windsor Castle. *Warton.*

Ver. 303. *Edward's acts*] Edward III. born here. *P.*

In what an exquisite strain does Gray speak of this monarch, and his son!

Mighty victor, mighty lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.

Which

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 300. *What kings first breath'd, &c.*]
"Not to recount those several kings, to whom
It gave a cradle, and to whom a tomb." *Denham.*

Draw monarchs chain'd, and Cressi's glorious field,
The lilies blazing on the regal shield:
Then, from her roofs when Verrio's colours fall,
And leave inanimate the naked wall,
Still in thy song should vanquish'd France appear,
And bleed for ever under Britain's spear.
Let softer strains ill-fated Henry mourn,
And palms eternal flourish round his urn.

NOTES.

Which is followed by that striking question,—

Is the sable warrior fled?——
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.

The Bard, strophe 2.

I have sometimes wondered that Pope did not mention the building of Windsor Castle by Edward III. His architect was William of Wykeham, whose name, it must not be wondered at, if I seize every opportunity of mentioning with veneration and gratitude. Yet, perhaps, he was rather the supervisor and comptroller of the work, than the actual architect, as he had singular talents for business, activity, and management of affairs. *Warton.*

Ver. 307.] "Without much invention, (says Mr. Walpole, vol. iii. p. 59.) and with less taste, Verrio's exuberant pencil was ready at pouring out gods, goddesses, kings, emperors, and triumphs, over those public surfaces, on which the eye never rests long enough to criticise, and where one should be sorry to place the works of a better master; I mean ceilings and staircases. He received, in all, for his various works, the sum of 6,845*l.*" *Bowles.*

Ver. 311. *Henry mourn.*] Henry VI. *P.*

How could he here omit the mention of Eton College, founded by this unfortunate King, and the Chapel of King's College in Cambridge. But Gray has made ample amends for this omission, by

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 307. Originally thus in the MS.

When Brass decays, when Trophies lie o'erthrown,
And mould'ring into dust *drops the proud stone.*

Here o'er the Martyr-King the marble weeps,
And, fast beside him, once-fear'd Edward sleeps:
Whom not th' extended Albion could contain,
From old Belerium to the northern main,
The grave unites; where e'en the Great find rest,
And blended lie th' oppressor and th' opprest!
Make sacred Charles's tomb for ever known,
(Obscure the place, and uninscrib'd the stone)
Oh fact accurst! what tears has Albion shed,
Heav'ns, what new wounds! and how her old have bled!

NOTES.

by his most beautiful ode on the prospect of this neighbouring college, from which so many ornaments and supports of state and church have proceeded. *Warton.*

Ver. 314. *once-fear'd Edward sleeps:*] Edward IV. *P.*

Ver. 316.] See an account of Belerium, so called from Bellerus, a Cornish giant, that part of Cornwall called the Lands End, in Warton's edition of Milton's Poems, p. 28. *Warton.*

Cape Cornwall is called by geographers *Promontorium* Bolericum, but by *Diodorus Siculus*, v. 21, *Belerium*. The same place is intended in Milton's Lycidas, v. 160.

Sleep'st by the fable of *Bellerus* old. *Wakefield.*

Ver. 319. *Make sacred Charles's*] Vigneul-Marville, v. 1. p. 152, relates a fact concerning this unhappy Monarch that I do not find mentioned in any history: which he says Lord Clarendon used to mention when he retired to Rouen in Normandy; that one of the first circumstances that gave disgust to the people of England, and to some of the nobility, was a hint thrown out by Charles

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 321. Originally thus in the MS.

Oh fact accurst! oh sacrilegious brood,
Sworn to Rebellion, principled in blood!
Since that dire morn what tears has Albion shed,
Gods! what new wounds, &c.

She saw her sons with purple death expire,
Her sacred domes involv'd in rolling fire,
A dreadful series of intestine wars,
Inglorious triumphs and dishonest scars.
At length great ANNA said—"Let Discord cease!"
She said, the world obey'd, and all was Peace!
In that blest moment, from his oozy bed
Old father Thames advanc'd his rev'rend head;
His tresses dropp'd with dews, and o'er the stream
His shining horns diffus'd a golden gleam;

NOTES.

Charles I. at the beginning of his reign, that he thought all the ecclesiastical revenues that had been seized and distributed by Henry VIII. ought to be restored to the church. *Warton.*

Ver. 329.] It may gratify a curious reader to see an extract of a letter of Prior to Lord Bolingbroke, written from Paris, May 18, 1713, concerning a medal that was to be struck on the Peace of

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 327. Thus in the MS.

Till Anna rose and bade the Furies cease;
Let there be peace—she said, and all was *Peace.*

Between Verse 330 and 331, originally stood these lines;

From shore to shore exulting shouts he heard,
O'er all his banks a lambent light appear'd,
With sparkling flames heav'n's glowing concave shone,
Fictitious stars, and glories not her own.
He saw, and gently rose above the stream;
His shining horns diffuse a golden gleam:
With pearl and gold his tow'ry front was drest,
The tributes of the distant East and West. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 328. *The world obey'd, and all was peace!*]
"Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, Peace." Milton.

Grav'd on his urn appear'd the moon, that guides
His swelling waters, and alternate tides;
The figur'd streams in waves of silver roll'd,
And on her banks Augusta rose in gold.
Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,
Who swell with tributary urns his flood:
First the fam'd authors of his ancient name,
The winding Isis and the fruitful Thame;
The Kennet swift, for silver eels renown'd;
The Lodden slow, with verdant alders crown'd;
Cole, whose dark streams his flow'ry islands lave;
And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave:
The blue, transparent Vandalis appears;
The gulphy Lee his sedgy tresses rears;
And sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood;
And silent Darent, stain'd with Danish blood.

NOTES.

of Utrecht, so highly celebrated in this passage: communicated to me by the favour of the late Duchess Dowager of Portland.

"I dislike your medal, with the motto,

—— COMPOSITIS VENERANTUR ARMIS. ——

I will have one of my own design; the Queen's bust surrounded with laurel, and with this motto,

ANNÆ AUG.

FELICI, PACIFICÆ:

Peace in a triumphal car, and the words,

PAX MISSA PER ORBEM.

This is ancient, this is simple, this is sense.

Rosier shall execute it, in a manner not seen in England since Simonds's time." *Warton.*

PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Ver. 341. *The Kennet swift for silver eels renown'd;*]

"The crystal Trent, for fords and *fish renown'd.*" *Drayton.*

High in the midst, upon his urn reclin'd,
(His sea-green mantle waving with the wind)
The God appear'd: he turn'd his azure eyes
Where Windsor-domes and pompous turrets rise;
Then bow'd and spoke; the winds forget to roar,
And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore.

NOTES.

Ver. 350.] Our poet was not deterred, from the censure which Addison passed in his Campaign, on raising and personifying river-gods, from giving us this fine description, in which Thames appears and speaks with suitable dignity and importance. How much superior is this picture to that of Boileau's Rhine; who represents the Naiads as alarming the God with an account of the march of the French Monarch; upon which the River God assumes the appearance of an old experienced commander, flies to a Dutch fort, and exhorts the garrison to dispute the intended passage. The Rhine, marching at their head, and observing Mars and Bellona on the side of the enemy, is so terrified with the view of these superior divinities, that he most gallantly runs away, and leaves the great hero, Louis XIV. in quiet possession of his banks.—So much for a true court poet, who would not have dared to write the eight last lines of this speech of Thames, from v. 415. The lines of Addison in the Campaign were;

Gods may descend in factions from the skies,
And rivers from their oozy beds arise.

I cannot forbear mentioning, that the very first composition that made the young Racine known at Paris was his Ode from the Nymph of the Seine to the Queen, which ode, by the way, was corrected by Chapelain, at that time in high vogue as a critic, and by him recommended to the court. *Warton.*

PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Ver. 348. *stain'd with Danish blood.*]

"And the old Lee brags *of the Danish blood.*" *Drayton.*

Ver. 351. *His azure eyes.*] Milton has *green-eyed* Neptune; and Virgil, of Proteus, Geor. iv.

"Ardentes oculos intorsit *lumine glauco.*"

Warton's Edition of Milton, p. 311.

Bowles.

" Hail, sacred Peace! hail, long-expected days,
That Thames's glory to the stars shall raise!
Tho' Tiber's streams immortal Rome behold,
Tho' foaming Hermus swells with tides of gold,
From heav'n itself tho' sev'nfold Nilus flows,
And harvests on a hundred realms bestows;
These now no more shall be the Muse's themes,
Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.
Let Volga's banks wish iron squadrons shine,
And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine,
Let barb'rous Ganges arm a servile train;
Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.
No more my sons shall dye with British blood
Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood:
Safe on my shore each unmolested swain
Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain;
The shady empire shall retain no trace
Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chace;
The trumpet sleep while chearful horns are blown,
And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.
Behold! th' ascending Villas on my side,
Project long shadows o'er the crystal tide;

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 363. Originally thus in the MS.

Let Venice boast her Tow'rs amidst the Main,
Where the rough Adrian swells and roars in vain;
Here not a Town, but spacious Realm shall have
A sure foundation on the rolling wave.

PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Ver. 354.

" And roll themselves asleep upon the shore."
Dryden's Ann. Mir.
Stevens.

Behold! Augusta's glitt'ring spires increase,
And Temples rise, the beauteous works of Peace.
I see, I see, where two fair cities bend
Their ample bow, a new Whitehall ascend!
There mighty Nations shall inquire their doom,
The World's great Oracle in times to come;
There Kings shall sue, and suppliant States be seen
Once more to bend before a BRITISH QUEEN.
Thy trees, fair Windsor! now shall leave their woods,
And half thy forests rush into thy floods.

NOTES.

Ver. 378. *And Temples rise,*] The fifty new Churches. *P.*

Ver. 380. *a new Whitehall*] "Several plates of the intended palace of Whitehall have been given, but, I believe, from no finished design of Inigo Jones. The four great sheets are evidently made up from general hints, nor could such a source of invention and taste, as the mind of Inigo, ever produce so much sameness. The strange kind of cherubims on the towers at the end are preposterous ornaments, and whether of Inigo or not, bear no relation to the rest. The great towers in the front are too near, and evidently borrowed from what he had seen in Gothic, not in Roman buildings. The circular court is a picturesque thought, but without meaning or utility." *Walpole.*

Ver. 385. *Thy trees, fair Windsor!*] This return to the trees of Windsor Forest, his original subject, is masterly and judicious; and the whole speech of Thames is highly animated and poetical, forcible and rich in diction, as it is copious and noble in imagery. *Bowles.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 385. &c. were originally thus,

Now shall our fleets the bloody Cross display
To the rich regions of the rising day.
Or those green isles, where headlong Titan steeps
His hissing axle in th' Atlantic deeps:
Tempt icy seas, &c. *P.*

Bear Britain's thunder, and her Cross display,
To the bright regions of the rising day;
Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,
Where clearer flames glow round the frozen Pole;
Or under southern skies exalt their sails,
Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!
For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,
The coral redden, and the ruby glow,
The pearly shell its lucid globe infold,
And Phœbus warm the rip'ning ore to gold.
The time shall come, when free as seas or wind
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,
Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,
And seas but join the regions they divide;
Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
And the new world launch forth to seek the old.
Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tide,
And feather'd people croud my wealthy side,
And naked youths and painted chiefs admire
Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!
Oh stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to shore,
'Till Conquest cease; and Slav'ry be no more;

NOTES.

Ver. 391.] Here is almost a prophecy of those discoveries of new islands and continents which this country of late years has had the honour to make. *Warton.*

Ver. 398. *Unbounded Thames, &c.*] A wish that London may be made a FREE PORT. *P.*

VARIATIONS.

The original lines were rejected, probably as too nearly resembling a passage in Comus,

"And the gilded car of day
His *glowing axle* doth allay
In the steep *Atlantic stream.*" *Bowles.*

'Till the freed Indians in their native groves
Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves,
Peru once more a race of Kings behold,
And other Mexico's be roof'd with gold.
Exil'd by thee from earth to deepest hell,
In brazen bonds, shall barb'rous Discord dwell:
Gigantic Pride, pale Terror, gloomy Care,
And mad Ambition shall attend her there:
There purple Vengeance bath'd in gore retires,
Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:
There hated Envy her own snakes shall feel,
And Persecution mourn her broken wheel:
There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,
And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain.

NOTES.

Ver. 409.]

To hear the savage youth repeat
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves,

says Mr. Gray, most beautifully in his ode; *dusky* loves is more accurate than *sable;* they are not negroes. *Warton.*

Ver. 422. *in vain.*] This conclusion both of Horace and of Pope is feeble and flat. The whole should have ended with this speech of Thames at this line, 422.

Pope, it seems, was of opinion, that descriptive poetry is a composition as absurd as a feast made up of sauces: and I know many other persons that think meanly of it. I will not presume to say it is equal, either in dignity or utility, to those compositions that lay open the internal constitution of man, and that imitate characters, manners, and sentiments. I may however remind such contemners of it, that, in a sister art, landscape-painting claims the very next rank to history-painting, being ever preferred to single portraits, to pieces of still-life, to droll figures, to fruit and flower-pieces; that Titian thought it no diminution of his genius, to spend much of his time in works of the former species; and that, if their principles

Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallow'd lays
Touch the fair fame of Albion's golden days:
The thoughts of Gods let GRANVILLE's verse recite,
And bring the scenes of op'ning fate to light.
My humble Muse, in unambitious strains,
Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains,
Where Peace descending bids her olive spring,
And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing.
Ev'n I more sweetly pass my careless days,
Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise;
Enough for me, that to the list'ning swains
First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.

NOTES.

principles lead them to condemn Thomson, they must also condemn the Georgics of Virgil, and the greatest part of the noblest descriptive poem extant; I mean that of Lucretius. *Warton.*

Ver. 434. It is observable that our Author finishes this poem with the first line of his *Pastorals*, as *Virgil* closed his *Georgics* with the first line of his *Eclogues*. *Wakefield.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 423.

" Quo, Musa, tendis? desine pervicax
Referre sermones Deorum et
Magna modis tenuare parvis." Hor.

A POEM *purely descriptive* has certainly no claim to excellence. But a poem which is at once moral, historical, and picturesque; or, in other words, where *description* is made subservient to the delighted fancy, the cultivated understanding, and the improved heart, surely no real judge of Poetry would condemn. What beautiful and interesting pieces would such a decision exclude! How many animating or tender sentiments, how many affecting incidents, how much interesting information, are often connected

with local scenery! The genuine Poet surveys every prospect with the eye and enthusiasm of a Painter; but does he only paint? He connects with the scenery he describes, morality, antiquity, history, the wildest traditions in fancy, or the sweetest feelings of tenderness, or patriotism. If we feel interested by the picture of an Arcadian landscape, which conveys its moral by the introduction of a shepherd's tomb, and the inscription "Et ego in Arcadia;" in like manner should we regard a descriptive poem, connected at the same time with wider information, and diversified with more pointed morality.

Pope in his Windsor Forest has description, incident, and history. The descriptive part, however, is too general and unappropriate: the incident, or story-part, is such as only would have been adopted by a young man, who had just read Ovid; but the historical part is very judiciously and skilfully blended, and the conclusion highly animated and poetical; nor can we be insensible to its more lofty tone of versification. *Bowles.*

AN

ESSAY

ON

CRITICISM.

Written in the Year

MDCCIX.

For a person of only twenty years old to have produced such an Essay, so replete with a knowledge of life and manners, such accurate observations on men and books, such variety of literature, such strong good sense, and refined taste and judgment, has been the subject of frequent and of just admiration. It may fairly entitle him to the character of being one of the first of critics, though surely not of Poets, as Dr. Johnson asserts.

Dr. Warburton, endeavouring to demonstrate, what Addison could not discover, nor what Pope himself, according to the testimony of his intimate friend, Richardson, ever thought of or intended, that this Essay was written with a methodical and systematical regularity, has accompanied the whole with a long and laboured commentary, in which he has tortured many passages to support this groundless opinion. Warburton had certainly wit, genius, and much miscellaneous learning; but was perpetually dazzled and misled by the eager desire of seeing every thing in a new light unobserved before, into perverse interpretations and forced comments. His passion being (as Longinus expresses it) τῶν ξένας νοήσεις αἰεὶ ζητεῖν. It is painful to see such abilities wasted on such unsubstantial objects—accordingly his notes on Shakspeare have been totally demolished by Edwards and Malone; and Gibbon has torn up by the roots his fanciful and visionary interpretation of the sixth book of Virgil: and but few readers, I believe, will be found that will cordially subscribe to an opinion lately delivered, that his notes on Pope's Works are the very best ever given on any classic whatever. For to instance no other, surely the attempt to reconcile the doctrines of the Essay on Man, to the doctrines of Revelation, is the rashest adventure in which ever critic yet engaged; this is, in truth, to divine, rather than to explain an author's meaning.

For these reasons, it is not thought proper to accompany this Essay with a perpetual commentary—a poem, as hath been well observed, that consists of precepts, is so far arbitrary and immethodical, that many of the paragraphs may change places with no apparent inconvenience; for of two or more positions, depending on some remote principle, there is seldom any cogent reason, why one should precede the other. *Warton.*

Of the general excellence of the Essay on Criticism all its Commentators are agreed. Johnson says, that " if Pope had written nothing else, it would have placed him among the first critics and the first poets; as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition—selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendour of illustration, and propriety of digression."—But with regard to its order and arrangement, as well as in some other respects, very different opinions have been entertained. Dr. Warburton, dissatisfied with the Critique of Addison in the Spectator (No. 235.) where it is said that the observations in the Essay follow one another without that methodical regularity that would have been requisite in a prose writer, has asserted that it is a regular piece, written on an uniform and consistent plan; which he has endeavoured to prove by a Commentary, published by him in the lifetime of Pope, and highly commended by him. This idea Dr. Warton has strenuously controverted; contending that Pope never intended to write this Essay with a systematical regularity, and that Warburton had tortured many passages, in order to give it a meaning which it otherwise had not. To these observations it might perhaps be sufficient to reply, that although the Essay on Criticism is not professedly written on a regular plan, yet it cannot be denied that a certain degree of order and succession prevails, which leads the reader through the most important topics connected with the subject; thereby uniting the charm of variety with the regularity of art. That Warburton has with great labour and ingenuity traced the thread that connects the whole, is in no degree injurious to the work; but on the contrary, serves to explain the author's meaning, and exemplify his precepts, on many occasions, where the nature of poetry, which abhors nothing so much as the appearance of formality and restraint, would not permit him to do it himself. " As the end of method is perspicuity," says Johnson, " that series is sufficiently regular that avoids obscurity; and where there is no obscurity, it will not be difficult to discover method." The Commentary of Warburton may therefore be considered as calculated to render the precepts of the poem applicable to general use. To which it may be added, that if this Commentary were only a perverse and forced interpretation, as Warton insinuates, it is scarcely likely that Pope would have approved of it so highly, as not only to speak of it in the warmest terms of admiration; but to allow

it to accompany his own edition of the poem. To assert that Pope was not the best judge of his own meaning, is an insult not only to his understanding but to common sense; and to discard the Commentary of Warburton, as Warton has done in his edition, in order to replace it by a series of notes, intended to impress the reader with his own opinions, is a kind of infringement on those rights, which had already been decided on by the only person who was entitled to judge on the subject. For these reasons I have thought it advisable, in this edition, to restore the Commentary of Warburton *intire*, which has only been partially done by Mr. Bowles; conceiving that it is as injurious, if not more so, to the Commentator, whose object it is to demonstrate the order and consistency of the poem, to deprive him of a portion of his remarks, as it is to deprive him of them altogether. At the same time it must be allowed, that the notes of Dr. Warton on this Essay are, in general, excellent, and add greatly to its value.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

INTRODUCTION. *That 'tis as great a fault to judge ill, as to write ill, and a more dangerous one to the public,* ver. 1.

That a true Taste *is as rare to be found, as a true* Genius, ver. 9 *to* 18.

That most men are born with some Taste, but spoil'd by false Education, ver. 19 *to* 25.

The Multitude of Critics, *and causes of them,* ver. 26 *to* 45.

That we are to study our own Taste, *and know the* Limits *of it,* ver. 46 *to* 67.

Nature *the best guide of judgment,* ver. 68 to 87.

Improved by Art *and* Rules, *which are but* methodis'd Nature, ver. 88.

Rules deriv'd from the Practice of the Ancient Poets, ver. 88 *to* 110.

That therefore the Ancients *are necessary to be studied by a Critic, particularly* Homer *and* Virgil, ver. 120 *to* 138.

Of Licenses, *and the use of them by the Ancients,* ver. 140 *to* 180.

Reverence due to the Ancients, *and praise of them,* ver. 181, &c.

PART II. Ver. 203, &c.

Causes hindering a true Judgment. 1. Pride, ver. 208. 2. Imperfect Learning, ver. 215. 3. *Judging by* parts, *and not by the* whole, ver. 233 *to* 288. *Critics in* Wit, Language, Versification, *only,* ver. 288, 305, 339, *&c.* 4. *Being too hard to please, or too apt to admire,* v. 384. 5. Partiality—*too much love to a Sect,—to the* Ancients *or* Moderns, ver. 324. 6. Prejudice *or* Prevention, ver. 408. 7. Singularity, ver. 424. 8. Inconstancy, ver. 430. 9. Party Spirit, ver. 452, *&c.* 10. Envy, ver. 466. *Against Envy and in praise of Good-nature,* ver. 508, *&c. When Severity is chiefly to be used by Critics,* ver. 526, *&c.*

PART III. Ver. 560, *&c.*

Rules for the Conduct *of* Manners *in a Critic*, 1. Candour, ver. 563. Modesty, ver. 566. Good-breeding, ver. 572. Sincerity *and* Freedom *of Advice*, ver. 578. 2. *When one's Counsel is to be restrained*, ver. 584. *Character of an* incorrigible Poet, ver. 600. *And of an* impertinent Critic, ver. 610, *&c. Character of a* good Critic, ver. 629. *The* History *of* Criticism, *and characters of the best Critics*, Aristotle, ver. 645. Horace, ver. 653. Dionysius, ver. 665. Petronius, ver. 667. Quintilian, ver. 670. Longinus, ver. 675. *Of the decay of Criticism, and its Revival*, Erasmus, ver. 693. Vida, ver. 705. Boileau, ver. 714. *Lord* Roscommon, *&c.* ver. 725. *Conclusion.*

AN

ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF WILLIAM WARBURTON, D.D.

'Tis hard to say, if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill;
But, of the two, less dang'rous is th' offence
To tire our patience, than mislead our sense.

COMMENTARY.

An Essay] The poem is in one book, but divided into three principal parts or numbers. The first [to ver. 201.] gives rules for the *Study of the Art of Criticism*: the second [from thence to ver. 560.] exposes the *Causes of wrong Judgment;* and the third [from thence to the end] marks out the *Morals of the Critic.*

In order to a right conception of this poem, it will be necessary to observe, that though it be intitled simply *An Essay on Criticism*, yet several of the precepts relate equally to the good *writing* as well as the true *judging* of a poem. This is so far from violating the *Unity* of the subject, that it preserves and completes it: or from disordering the regularity of the *Form*, that it adds beauty to it, as will appear by the following considerations: 1. It was impossible to give a full and exact idea of the Art of *Poetical Criticism*, without considering at the same time the *Art of Poetry;* so far as Poetry is an *Art*. These therefore being closely connected in nature, the author has, with much judgment, interwoven the precepts of each reciprocally through his whole poem. 2. As the rules of the antient Critics were taken from Poets who copied nature, this is another reason why every Poet should be a Critic: therefore as the subject is *poetical Criticism*, it is frequently addressed to the *critical Poet*. And 3dly, the Art of Criticism is as properly, and much more usefully exercised in *writing*, than in *judging*.

But

Some few in that, but numbers err in this,
Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss;
A fool might once himself alone expose,
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.
'Tis with our judgments, as our watches, none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

COMMENTARY.

But readers have been misled by the modesty of the *Title*, which only promises an Art of *Criticism*, to expect little, where they will find a great deal; a treatise, and that no incomplete one, of the Art both of *Criticism* and *Poetry*. This, and the not attending to the considerations offered above, was what, perhaps, misled a very candid writer, after having given the ESSAY ON CRITICISM all the praises on the side of genius and poetry which his true taste could not refuse it, to say, that *the observations follow one another like those in* Horace's Art of Poetry, *without that methodical regularity which would have been requisite in a prose writer*. Spect. No. 235. I do not see how *method* can hurt any one grace of Poetry; or what prerogative there is in Verse to dispense with *regularity*. The remark is false in every part of it. Mr. Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, the Reader will soon see, is a regular piece: And a very learned Critic has lately shewn, that *Horace* had the same attention to method in his *Art of Poetry*. See *Mr.* Hurd's *Comment on the Epistle to the Pisos.*

Ver. 1. *'Tis hard to say, &c.*] The Poem opens [from ver. 1 to 9.] with shewing the use and seasonableness of the subject. Its *use*, from the greater mischief in wrong Criticism than in ill Poetry; this only tiring, that misleading the reader: Its *seasonableness*, from the growing number of bad Critics, which now vastly exceeds that of bad poets.

Ver. 9. *'Tis with our judgments, &c.*] The author having shewn us the expediency of his subject, the Art of *Criticism*, inquires next [from ver. 8 to 15.] into the proper *Qualities* of a *true Critic*: and observes first, that JUDGMENT alone, is not sufficient to constitute this character, because *Judgment*, like the *artificial measures of Time*, goes different, and yet each man relies upon his own. The reasoning is conclusive; and the similitude extremely just. For *Judgment*, when it is alone, is generally regulated, or at least much influenced,

In Poets as true Genius is but rare,
True Taste as seldom is the Critic's share;

COMMENTARY.

influenced by custom, fashion, and habit; and never certain and constant but when founded upon and accompanied by TASTE: which is in the *Critic*, what in the *Poet*, we call GENIUS: both are derived from Heaven, and like the Sun, the *natural measure of Time*, always constant and equable.

Judgment alone, it is allowed, will not make a Poet; where is the wonder then, that it will not make a Critic in poetry? for on examination we shall find, that *Genius* and *Taste* are but one and the same faculty, differently exerting itself under different names, in the two professions of *Poetry* and *Criticism*. The Art of Poetry consists in *selecting*, out of all those images which present themselves to the fancy, such of them as are truly beautiful: and the Art of Criticism in discerning, and fully relishing what it finds so selected. The main difference is, that in the POET, this faculty is eminently joined to a *bright imagination*, and *extensive comprehension*, which provide stores for the selection, and can form that selection, by proportioned parts, into a regular whole: in the CRITIC, it is joined to a *solid judgment* and *accurate discernment*, which can penetrate into the causes of an excellence, and display that excellence in all its variety of lights. Longinus had *taste* in an *eminent*

NOTES.

Ver. 11. *In Poets as true Genius is but rare,*] It is indeed so extremely rare, that no country, in the succession of many ages, has produced above three or four persons that deserve the title. The "man of rhymes" may be easily found; but the genuine poet, of a lively plastic imagination, the true Maker or Creator, is so uncommon a prodigy, that one is almost tempted to subscribe to the opinion of Sir William Temple, where he says, "That for one man that is born capable of making a great poet, there may be a thousand born capable of making as great generals, or ministers of state, as the most renowned in story." *Warton.*

Ver. 12. *True Taste as seldom*] The first piece of criticism in our language, worthy our attention, for little can be gathered from Webbe and Puttenham, was Sir Philip Sydney's Defence of Poesie. Spenser

Both must alike from Heav'n derive their light,
These born to judge, as well as those to write.
Let such teach others who themselves excel, 15
And censure freely, who have written well.

COMMENTARY.

eminent degree; therefore, this quality, which all true Critics have in common, our Author makes his distinguishing character;

" Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
And bless their Critic with a Poet's fire."

i. e. with *taste* or *genius*.

Ver. 15. *Let such teach others, &c.*] But it is not enough that the Critic hath these natural endowments of judgment and taste, to entitle him to exercise his Art; he should, as our author shews us [from ver. 14 to 19.] in order to give a further test of his qualification, have put them successfully into use. And this on two accounts: 1. Because the office of a Critic is an exercise of authority. 2. Because he being naturally as partial to his *Judgment* as the Poet

NOTES.

Spenser is said to have written a critical discourse, called The Poet; the loss of which, considering the exquisite taste and extensive learning of Spenser, is much to be regretted. Next came Daniel's Apology; then Ben Jonson's Discoveries, the Preface to Gondibert, and Hobbes's Letter to D'Avenant, the Preface and Notes of Cowley (whose prose style, by the way, is admirable), Temple's Essays, Dryden's Essay on Dramatic Poetry, and his various Prefaces and Prologues, Rhymer's Preface to Rapin, and Letter on Tragedy, and Dennis's Reformation of Poetry, and the Essays of Roscommon and Buckingham. These were the critical pieces that preceded our Author's Essay, which was published without his name, May 1711, about the same time with Fenton's Epistle to Southerne; and did not, as Lewis the bookseller told me, sell at first, till our Author sent copies, as presents, to several eminent persons. *Warton.*

Ver. 15. *Let such teach others*] " Qui scribit artificiose, ab aliis commode scripta facile intelligere poterit." Cic. ad Herenn. lib. iv. " De pictore, sculptore, fictore, nisi artifex, judicare non potest." Pliny. *P.*

It

Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,
But are not Critics to their judgment too?

COMMENTARY.

Poet is to his *Wit*, his partiality would have nothing to correct it, as that of the person judged hath by the very terms. Therefore some *test* is necessary; and the best, and most unexceptionable, is his having written well himself; an approved remedy against *Critical partiality*; and the surest means of so maturing the Judgment as to reap with glory what *Longinus* calls "the last and most perfect fruits of much study and experience." Η ΓΑΡ ΤΩΝ ΛΟΓΩΝ ΚΡΙΣΙΣ ΠΟΛΛΗΣ ΕΣΤΙ ΠΕΙΡΑΣ ΤΕΛΕΥΤΑΙΟΝ ΕΠΙΓΕΝΝΗΜΑ. *Warburton.*

NOTES.

It is remarked by Dryden, I think, that none but a poet is qualified to judge of a poet. The maxim is however contradicted by experience. But although such as have actually performed nothing in the art itself, may not, on that account, be totally disqualified to judge with accuracy of any piece of workmanship, yet, perhaps, a judgment will come with more authority and force from an artist himself. Hence the connoisseurs highly prize the treatise of Rubens concerning the Imitation of Antique Statues, the Art of Painting by Lionardo da Vinci, and the Lives of the Painters by Vasari. As, for the same reasons, Rameau's Dissertation on The Thorough Bass; and The Introduction to a Good Taste in Music, by the excellent, but neglected, Geminiani, demand a particular regard. The prefaces of Dryden would be equally valuable, if he did not so frequently contradict himself, and advance opinions diametrically opposite to each other. Some of Corneille's discourses on his own tragedies are admirably just. And one of the best pieces of modern criticism, The Academy's Observations on the Cid, was, we know, the work of persons who had themselves written well. And our Author's own excellent preface to his translation of the Iliad, one of the best pieces of prose in the English language, is an example how well poets are qualified to be critics. *Warton.*

To these may be added Burney's History, and Criticisms, on Music; and Sir Joshua Reynolds's excellent Discourses on Painting. *Bowles.*

The maxim recommended in the text, and inforced in the notes, is

Yet if we look more closely, we shall find
Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind: 20

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 19. *Yet if we look, &c.*] But the Author having been thus free with the fundamental quality of Criticism, *Judgment*, so as to charge it with *inconstancy* and *partiality*, and to be often warped by *custom* and *affection;* that he may not be misunderstood, he next explains [from ver. 18 to 36.] the nature of *Judgment*, and the accidents occasioning those miscarriages before objected to it. He owns, that the *seeds* of *Judgment* are indeed sown in the minds of most men, but by ill culture, as it springs up, it generally runs wild: either on the one hand, by FALSE LEARNING, which pedants call *Philology;* and by FALSE REASONING, which Philosophers call *School-learning:* or, on the other, by FALSE WIT, which is not regulated by *sense;* and by FALSE POLITENESS, which is solely regulated by the *fashion*. Both these sorts, who have their Judgment thus doubly depraved, the poet observes, are naturally turned to censure and abuse; only with this difference, that the learned *Dunce* always affects to be on the *reasoning*, and the unlearned *Fool* on the *laughing* side.—And thus, at the same time, our author proves the truth of his introductory observation, *that the number of bad Critics is vastly superior to that of bad Poets.*

NOTES.

is but of questionable authority. Poets and Painters must appeal to the world at large, and the world has a right to decide on their productions. Wretched indeed would be their fate, if their merits were to be decided only by their rivals. It is on the general opinion of persons of taste and judgment that their individual estimation must ultimately rest, and if the public were excluded from judging, poets might write and painters paint for each other. Every painter and every writer has a style or manner of his own, by which his productions are characterized, and which he conceives to be preferable to all the rest. This he naturally and unavoidably applies to judge of the productions of others, which he approves or condemns according as they approach to, or recede from, his own standard. Rubens must judge like Rubens, Lionardo like Lionardo, and Vasari like Vasari. Pope has been aware of, and has endeavoured to obviate this remark in the following lines:

" Authors

Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light,
The lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right;
But as the slightest sketch, if justly trac'd,
Is by ill-colouring but the more disgrac'd,
So by false learning is good sense defac'd:

NOTES.

" Authors are partial to their wit 'tis true;
But are not critics to their judgment too?

To which it may be answered, that the Critic or Connoisseur, who is conversant with the style of different artists or writers, forms in his mind an idea of general excellence, which enables him to give a more impartial, and perhaps a more correct opinion, than a professor in any particular department. Accordingly, experience has shewn, that the most eminent critics in literature, or in art, are not found among professed poets or artists,—witness Aristotle, Longinus, the elder and younger Pliny, Quintilian, Fr. Junius, Borghini, Malvasia, Winckelman, De Piles, Du Bos, Lanzi, and numerous writers of our own country. The instances referred to by Warton are mostly practical treatises on art, not on the Principles of taste. If we would promote these studies, we must diffuse the spirit of criticism as widely as possible, and give to the Professors a PUBLIC, which alone can properly appreciate and fully remunerate their labours.

Ver. 20. *Most have the seeds*] " Omnes tacito quodam sensu sine ullâ arte aut ratione, quæ sint in artibus ac rationibus, recta et prava disjudicant."—Cic. de Orat. lib. iii. *P.*

Ver. 25. *So by false learning*] " Plus sine doctrinâ prudentia, quam sine prudentiâ valet doctrina."—Quint. *P.*

VARIATIONS.

Between ver. 25 and 26 were these lines, since omitted by the author:

Many are spoil'd by that pedantic throng,
Who with great pains teach youth to reason wrong.
Tutors, like Virtuoso's, oft inclined
By strange transfusion to improve the mind,
Draw off the sense we have, to pour in new;
Which yet, with all their skill, they ne'er could do. *P.*

Some are bewilder'd in the maze of schools,
And some made coxcombs Nature meant but fools.
In search of wit these lose their common sense,
And then turn Critics in their own defence:
Each burns alike, who can, or cannot write,
Or with a Rival's, or an Eunuch's spite.
All fools have still an itching to deride,
And fain would be upon the laughing side.
If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite,
There are, who judge still worse than he can write.
Some have at first for Wits, then Poets past,
Turn'd Critics next, and prov'd plain fools at last.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 36. *Some have at first for Wits, &c.*] The poet having enumerated, in this account of the nature of *Judgment* and its various depravations, the several sorts of *bad critics*, and ranked them into two general Classes; as the first sort, namely the men spoiled by *false learning*, are but few in comparison of the other, and likewise come less within his main view (which is *poetical Criticism*) but keep grovelling at the bottom amongst *words* and *syllables*, he thought it enough for his purpose here, just to have mentioned them,

NOTES.

Ver. 28. *In search of wit these lose their common sense,*] This observation is extremely just. *Search of Wit* is not only the occasion, but the efficient cause of the loss of *common sense*. For *Wit* consisting in chusing out, and setting together such Ideas from whose assemblage pleasant pictures may be drawn on the Fancy; the *Judgment*, through an habitual search of Wit, loses, by degrees, its faculty of seeing the true relation of things; in which consists the exercise of *common sense*. *Warburton.*

Ver. 32. *All fools*] The sentiment is just. And if Hobbes's account of laughter be true, that it arises from a silly pride, we see the reason of it. The *expression* too is fine; it alludes to the condition of idiots and natural fools, who are observed to be ever on the grin. *Warburton.*

Some neither can for Wits nor Critics pass,
As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.
Those half-learn'd witlings, num'rous in our isle,
As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;
Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,
Their generation's so equivocal:

COMMENTARY.

them, proposing to do them right hereafter. But the men spoiled by *false taste* are innumerable; and these are his proper concern: he therefore [from ver. 35 to 46.] sub-divides them again into the two classes of the *volatile* and *heavy:* he describes, in few words, the quick progression of the one through Criticism, from false wit, to plain folly, where they end; and the fixed station of the other between the confines of both; who under the name of *Witlings*, have neither end nor measure. A kind of half-formed creature from the equivocal generation of *vivacity* and *dulness*, like those on the banks of *Nile*, from *heat* and *mud*.

NOTES.

Ver. 38. *Some neither can for Wits nor Critics pass,*] These lines, and those preceding and following them, are excellently satirical; and are, I think, the first we find in Pope's works, that give an indication of that species of poetry to which his talent was most powerfully bent. The simile of the mule heightens the satire, and is new; as is the application of the insects of the Nile. Pope never shines so brightly as when he is proscribing bad authors.

"The Nile (says Fenton on Waller) has been as fruitful of English similes as the sun; from both which it would be as severe to restrain a young poet, as forbidding the use of fire and water was esteemed among the Romans." *Warton.*

Ver. 43. *Their generations so equivocal,*] It is sufficient that a principle of philosophy has been generally received, whether it be true or false, to justify a poet's use of it to set off his wit. But to recommend his *argument*, he should be cautious how he uses any but the true. For falsehood, when it is set too near the truth, will tarnish what it should brighten up. Besides, the *analogy* between natural and moral truth makes the principle of true philosophy the fittest for this use. Our poet has been pretty careful in observing this rule. *Warburton.*

To tell 'em would an hundred tongues require,
Or one vain wit's, that might a hundred tire.
But you who seek to give and merit fame,
And justly bear a Critic's noble name,
Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,
How far your genius, taste, and learning go;
Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet,
And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 46. *But you who seek, &c.*] Our Author having thus far, by way of INTRODUCTION, explained the nature, use, and abuse of *Criticism*, in a figurative description of the qualities and characters of *Critics*, proceeds now to deliver the precepts of the art. The first of which [from ver. 45 to 68.] is, that he who sets up for a Critic should previously examine his own strength, and see how far he is qualified for the exercise of his profession. He puts him in a way to make this discovery, in that admirable direction given ver. 51.

AND MARK THAT POINT WHERE SENSE AND DULNESS MEET.

He had shewn above, that *Judgment*, without *Taste* or *Genius*, is equally incapable of making a Critic or a Poet: In whatsoever subject then the Critic's *Taste* no longer accompanies his *Judgment*, there he may be assured he is going out of his depth. This our Author finely calls,

that point where sense and dulness meet.

And immediately adds the REASON of his precept; the Author of Nature having so constituted the mental faculties, that one of them can never greatly excel, but at the expense of another. From this state of coordination in the mental faculties, and the influence and effects they have upon one another, the poet draws this CONSEQUENCE, that no one Genius can EXCEL in more than one Art or Science. The *consequence* shews the *necessity* of the precept, just as the *premises*, from which the consequence is drawn, shew the *reasonableness* of it. *Warburton.*

NOTES.

Ver. 51. *And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.*] Besides the *peculiar sense* explained above in the Comment, the words have still a more general meaning, and caution us against going on,

Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,
And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit.
As on the land while here the ocean gains,
In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;
Thus in the Soul while memory prevails,
The solid pow'r of understanding fails;
Where beams of warm imagination play,
The memory's soft figures melt away.

NOTES.

on, when our ideas begin to grow obscure; as we are then most apt to do; though that obscurity be an admonition that we should leave off, for it arises, either from our small acquaintance with the subject, or the incomprehensibility of its nature. In which circumstances a genius will always write as badly as a dunce. An observation well worth the attention of all profound writers.

Warburton.

Ver. 56. *Thus in the Soul*] The beauty of imagery in these lines should not make us blind to the want of justness in the thought. To represent strength of memory as incompatible with solidity of understanding, is so obviously contrary to fact, that I presume the author had in his eye only the case of extraordinary memory for names, dates, and things, which offer no ideas to the mind; which has, indeed, been often displayed in great perfection by mere idiots. For, it is difficult to conceive how the faculty of judgment, which consists in the comparison of different ideas, can at all be exercised without the power of storing up ideas in the mind, and calling them forth when required. From the second couplet, apparently meant to be the converse of the first, one would suppose that he consulted the understanding and the imagination as the same faculty, else the counterpart is defective. Further, so far is it from being true that imagination obliterates the figures of memory, that the circumstance which causes a thing to be remembered, is principally its being associated with other ideas by the agency of the imagination. If the poet only meant, that those ideas about which imagination is occupied, are apt to exclude ideas of a different kind, the remark is true, but it should have been differently expressed. *Warton.*

One science only will one genius fit; 60
So vast is art, so narrow human wit:

NOTES.

Ver. 60. *One science only will one genius fit;*] When Tully attempted poetry, he became as ridiculous as Bolingbroke when he attempted philosophy and divinity.

When Fontaine, whose Tales indicated a truly comic genius, brought a comedy on the stage, it was received with a contempt equally unexpected and deserved. Terence has left us no tragedy; and the Mourning Bride of Congreve, notwithstanding the praises bestowed on it by Pope, in the Dunciad, is certainly a despicable performance; the plot is unnaturally intricate, and overcharged with incidents, the sentiments trite, and the language turgid and bombast. The Biter of Rowe is wretched. Heemskirk and Teniers could not succeed in a serious and sublime subject of history painting. The latter, it is well known, designed cartoons for tapestry, representing the history of the Turriani of Lombardy. Both the composition and the expression are extremely indifferent; and certain nicer virtuosi have remarked, that in the serious pieces of Titian himself, even in one of his Last Suppers, a circumstance of the ridiculous and the familiar is introduced, which suits not with the dignity of his subject. Hogarth's Sigismonda disgraced his pencil.

The modesty and good sense of the ancients is, in this particular, as in others, remarkable. The same writer never presumed to undertake more than one kind of dramatic poetry, if we except the Cyclops of Euripides. A poet never presumed to plead in public, or to write history, or indeed any considerable work in prose. The same actors never recited tragedy and comedy: this was observed long ago, by Plato, in the third book of his Republic. They seem to have held that diversity, nay universality, of excellence, at which the moderns frequently aim, to be a gift unattainable by man. We therefore, of Great Britain, have, perhaps, more reason to congratulate ourselves, on two great phenomena; I mean Shakspeare's being able to pourtray characters so very different as Falstaff and Macbeth; and Garrick's being able to personate so inimitably a Lear, or an Abel Drugger. *Warton.*

Neither the authority of the poet nor the efforts of the annotator can

Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
But oft in those confin'd to single parts.
Like Kings we lose the conquests gain'd before,
By vain ambition still to make them more:
Each might his sev'ral province well command,
Would all but stoop to what they understand.

NOTES.

can establish the authority of these and the six following lines, which seem to be the result of that tendency to depreciate the powers of the human mind, which is observable in some other parts of the writings of Pope. So far is it from being true, that "*one science only will one genius fit*," that it may safely be asserted that no man ever made a great proficiency in any one department of science, or art, without a considerable acquaintance with many collateral branches, which were necessary to enable him to prosecute his studies to any great or useful extent. But of all subjects, that to which this maxim is the most inapplicable, is the science of Criticism, which requires not only the most various endowments of the human intellect, but the most extensive acquaintance with all the works of nature and of art. Instead of asserting that the human mind loses, on the one hand, what it acquires on the other, "*Like kings who lose the conquests gain'd before*," it might be with more truth asserted, that every new acquisition strengthens those we already possess, and that the mind is invigorated by exercise as well as the body. CICERO, it is true, was no poet, but in how many departments of knowledge did he excel? What were the diversity and extent of those acquisitions that filled up the mind of a BACON? Can SHAKSPEARE's talents be said to have been confined to one science? or are we, like Dr. Warton, to consider him merely as a phenomenon peculiar to our own country? Turn to MICHELAGNOLO, "the sculptor, painter, poet, architect; to LIONARDO DA VINCI, to RAFFAELLE, to SALVATOR ROSA,—men who have devoted themselves to different branches of science and of art, and who have excelled in whatever they have attempted; whose examples alone, if no others could be produced, are sufficient to refute the assertion that "*One science only will one genius fit.*"

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 68. *First follow Nature, &c.*] The Critic observing the directions before given, and now finding himself qualified for his office, is shewn next, *how* to exercise it. And as he was to attend to Nature for a *call*, so he is first and principally to follow Nature when *called*. And here again in this, as in the foregoing precept, our Poet [from ver. 67 to 88.] shews both the *fitness* and *necessity* of it. I. Its *fitness*, 1. Because Nature is the *source* of Poetic art; this art being only a representation of Nature, who is its great exemplar and original. 2. Because Nature is the *end* of Art; the design of poetry being to convey the knowledge of Nature in the most agreeable manner. 3. Because Nature is the *test* of Art, as she is unerring, constant, and still the same. Hence the poet observes, that as Nature is the *source*, she conveys *life* to art: As she is the *end*, she conveys *force* to it, for the *force* of any thing arises from its being directed to its *end:* and as she is the *test*, she conveys *beauty* to it, for every thing acquires *beauty* by its being reduced to its true *standard*. Such is the sense of these two important lines,

Life, force, and *beauty* must to all impart,
At once the *source*, and *end*, and *test* of Art.

II. The *necessity* of the precept is seen from hence. The two constituent qualities of a *Composition*, as such, are *Art* and *Wit:* but neither of these attains perfection, 'till the first be *hid*, and the other judiciously *restrained;* this only happens when *Nature* is exactly followed; for then Art never makes a parade; nor can Wit commit an extravagance. Art, while it *adheres* to Nature, and has so large a *fund* in the resources which Nature supplies, disposes every thing with so much *ease* and *simplicity*, that we see nothing but those natural images it works with, while itself stands unobserved behind: but when Art *leaves* Nature, misled either by the bold sallies of Fancy, or the quaint oddnesses of Fashion, she is then obliged at every step to come forward, in a painful or pompous ostentation, in order to cover, to soften, or to regulate the shocking disproportion of *unnatural* images. In the first case, our Poet compares Art to the Soul within, in forming a beauteous body;

but

Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of Art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides;
Works without show, and without pomp presides:
In some fair body thus th' informing soul
With spirits feeds, with vigor fills the whole,
Each motion guides, and ev'ry nerve sustains;
Itself unseen, but in th' effects remains.
Some, to whom Heav'n in wit has been profuse,
Want as much more, to turn it to its use;

COMMENTARY.

but in the last, we are bid to consider it but as a mere outward garb, fitted only to hide the defects of a mis-shapen one.—As to *Wit*, it might perhaps be imagined that this needed only *Judgment* to govern it: but, as he well observes

" *Wit* and *Judgment* often are at strife,
Tho' meant each other's aid, like man and wife."

They want therefore some friendly Mediator; and this Mediator is *Nature:* and in attending to Nature, *Judgment* will learn where he should comply with the charms of Wit; and *Wit* how she ought to obey the sage directions of Judgment.

NOTES.

Ver. 80. *Some, to whom Heav'n, &c.*] Here the Poet (in a sense he was not, at first, aware of) has given an example of the truth of his observation, in the observation itself. The two lines stood originally thus:

" There are whom Heav'n has blest with store of Wit,
Yet want as much again to manage it."

In the first line, *wit* is used, in the modern sense, for the effort of Fancy; in the second line it is used, in the ancient sense, for the result of Judgment. This trick, play'd the Reader, he endeavoured to keep out of sight, by altering the lines as they now stand,

" Some, to whom Heav'n in Wit has been profuse,
Want as much more, to turn it to its use."

For

For wit and judgment often are at strife,
Tho' meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
'Tis more to guide, than spur the Muse's steed;
Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed;
The winged courser, like a gen'rous horse,
Shews most true mettle when you check his course.
Those RULES of old discover'd, not devis'd,
Are Nature still, but Nature methodiz'd;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 88. *Those Rules of old, &c.*] Having thus, in his first precept, *to follow Nature*, settled Criticism on its true foundation; he proceeds to shew, what assistance may be had from *Art*. But least this should be thought to draw the Critic from the ground where our Poet had before fixed him, he previously observes [from ver. 87 to 92.] that these *Rules of Art*, which he is now about to recommend to the Critic's observance, were not *invented* by abstract speculation; but *discovered* in the book of Nature; and that therefore, tho' they may seem to restrain *Nature* by *Laws*, yet as they are laws of her own making, the Critic is still properly in the very liberty of Nature. These Rules the ancient Critics borrowed from the Poets, who received them immediately from *Nature*.

" Just Precepts thus from great Examples giv'n,
These drew from them what they deriv'd from Heav'n."

so that both are to be well studied.

NOTES.

For the words, *to manage it*, as the lines were at first, too plainly discovered the change put upon the Reader, in the use of the word, *wit*. This is now a little covered by the latter expression of—*turn it to its use*. But then the alteration, in the preceding line, from—*store of wit*, to *profuse*, was an unlucky change. For though he who has *store of wit* may want more, yet he to whom it was given in *profusion* could hardly be said to want more. The truth is, the Poet had said a lively thing, and would, at all hazards, preserve the reputation of it, though the very topic he is upon obliged him to detect the imposition, in the very next lines, which shew

Nature, like Liberty, is but restrain'd 90
By the same Laws which first herself ordain'd.

NOTES.

shew he meant two very different things, by the very same term, in the two preceding,

" For wit and judgment often are at strife,
Tho' meant each other's aid, like man and wife."

Warburton.

Ver. 88. *Those* RULES *of old, &c.*] Cicero has, best of any one I know, explained what that thing is which reduces the wild and scattered parts of human knowledge into *arts*—" Nihil est quod ad artem redigi possit, nisi ille prius, qui illa tenet, quorum artem instituere vult, habeat illam scientiam, ut ex iis rebus, quarum ars nondum sit, artem efficere possit.—Omnia fere, quæ sunt conclusa nunc artibus, dispersa et dissipata quondam fuerunt, ut in Musicis, &c. Adhibita est igitur ars quædam extrinsecus ex alio genere quodam, quod sibi totum PHILOSOPHI assumunt, quæ rem dissolutam divulsamque conglutinaret, et ratione quadam constringeret."—De Orat. l. i. c. 41, 2. *Warburton.*

The precepts of the art of poetry were posterior to practice; the rules of the Epopea were all drawn from the Iliad, and the Odyssey; and of Tragedy, from the Oedipus of Sophocles. A petulant rejection, and an implicit veneration, of the rules of the ancient critics, are equally destructive of true taste. " It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer (says the Rambler, No. 156.) to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is established because it is right, from that which is right only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of any beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules, which no literary dictator had authority to prescribe."

This liberal and manly censure of critical bigotry, extends not to those fundamental and indispensable rules, which nature and necessity dictate, and demand to be observed; such, for instance, as in the higher kinds of poetry, that the action of the epopea, be one, great, and entire: that the hero be eminently distinguished, move our concern, and deeply interest us; that the episodes arise easily out of the main fable; and the action commence as near the catastrophe as possible; and, in the drama, that no more events be crowded

Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,
When to repress, and when indulge our flights:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 92. *Hear how learn'd Greece, &c.*] He speaks of the *ancient Critics* first, and with great judgment, as the previous knowledge of them is necessary for reading the Poets, with that fruit which the end here proposed, requires. But having, in the foregoing observation, sufficiently explained the *nature* of ancient Criticism, he enters on the subject [treated of from ver. 91 to 118.] with a sublime description of its *end;* which was to illustrate the beauties of the best writers, in order to excite others to an emulation

NOTES.

crowded together, than can be justly supposed to happen during the time of representation, or to be transacted on one individual spot, and the like. But the absurdity here animadverted on, is the scrupulous nicety of those who bind themselves to obey frivolous and unimportant laws; such as, that an epic poem should consist not of less than twelve books; that it should end fortunately; that in the first book there should be no simile; that the exordium should be very simple and unadorned; that in a tragedy, only three personages should appear at once upon the stage; and that every tragedy should consist of five acts; by the rigid observation of which last unnecessary precept, the poet is deprived of using many a moving story, that would furnish matter enough for three perhaps, but not for five acts: with other rules of the like indifferent nature.

It has become a fashionable attempt of late, to censure and decry an obedience to the rules laid down by ancient critics; while one party loudly and frequently exclaim,

——— Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manû, versate diurnâ;

Another instantly answers,

—— O imitatores servum pecus! *Warton.*

Ver. 92. *Hear how learn'd Greece, &c.*] In the second part of Shaftesbury's *Advice to an Author*, is a judicious and elegant account of the rise and progress of arts and sciences in ancient Greece. For a passage that relates to the origin of *Criticism*, v. *Characteristics*, vol. 1, 12mo. p. 163. *Warton.*

High on Parnassus' top her sons she show'd,
And pointed out those arduous paths they trod;
Held from afar, aloft, th' immortal prize,
And urg'd the rest by equal steps to rise.
Just precepts thus from great examples giv'n,
She drew from them what they deriv'd from Heav'n.

COMMENTARY.

lation of their excellence. From the raptures which these ideas inspire, the poet is brought back, by the follies of modern Criticism, now before his eyes, to reflect on its base degeneracy. And as the restoring the Art to its original purity and splendour is the great purpose of this poem, he first takes notice of those, who seem not to understand that *Nature* is exhaustless; that *new models* of good writing may be produced in every age; and consequently, that *new rules* may be formed from these models, in the same manner as the old Critics formed theirs, which was, from the writings of the ancient Poets: but men wanting art and ability to form these *new rules*, were content to receive and file up for use, the *old ones of Aristotle, Quintilian, Longinus, Horace, &c.* with the same vanity and boldness that apothecaries practise, with their doctors' bills: and then rashly applying them to *new Originals* (cases which they did not hit) it was no more in their power than in their inclination to imitate the candid practice of the *Ancients*, when

" The gen'rous Critic fann'd the Poet's fire,
And taught the world with Reason to admire;"

For, as *Ignorance*, when joined with *Humility*, produces stupid admiration, on which account it is commonly observed to be the *mother of Devotion* and blind homage: so when joined with *Vanity* (as it always is in bad Critics) it gives birth to every iniquity of impudent abuse and slander. See an example (for want of a better) in a late ridiculous and now forgotten thing, called the *Life*

NOTES.

Ver. 98. *Just precepts*] "Nec enim artibus editis factum est ut argumenta inveniremus, sed dicta sunt omnia antequam præciperentur; mox ea scriptores observata et collecta ediderunt." Quintil. *P.*

The gen'rous Critic fann'd the Poet's fire,
And taught the world with reason to admire.
Then Criticism the Muse's handmaid prov'd,
To dress her charms, and make her more belov'd:
But following wits from that intention stray'd,
Who could not win the mistress, woo'd the maid;
Against the Poets their own arms they turn'd,
Sure to hate most the men from whom they learn'd.

COMMENTARY.

Life of Socrates; where the Head of the author (as a man of wit observed) has just made a shift to do the office of a *camera obscura*, and represent things in an inverted order; himself *above*, and Spratt, Rollin, Voltaire, and every other writer of reputation, *below*.

NOTES.

Ver. 103. *To dress her charms,*] What a dreadful picture has Swift drawn of the evil demon of criticism.

" Momus fearing the worst, and calling to mind an ancient prophecy, which bore no very good face to his children the moderns, bent his flight to the region of a malignant deity, called Criticism. She dwelt on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla; there Momus found her extended in her den, upon the spoils of numberless volumes, half devoured. At her right hand sat Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age; at her left, Pride, her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself had torn. There, was Opinion, her sister, light of foot, hoodwinked, and headstrong, yet giddy, and perpetually turning. About her played her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners. The goddess, herself, had claws like a cat; her head, and ears, and voice, resembled those of an ass; her teeth fallen out before; her eyes turned inward, as if she looked only upon herself; her diet was the overflowing of her own gall: her spleen was so large, as to stand prominent like a dug of the first rate, nor wanted excrescences in form of teats, at which a crew of ugly monsters were greedily sucking; and what is wonderful to conceive, the bulk of spleen encreased faster than the sucking could diminish it."—Tale of a Tub, p. 200. *Warton.*

So modern 'Pothecaries, taught the art
By Doctors' bills to play the Doctor's part,
Bold in the practice of mistaken rules,
Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.
Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey,
Nor time nor moths e'er spoil so much as they.
Some drily plain, without invention's aid,
Write dull receipts how poems may be made.
These leave the sense, their learning to display,
And those explain the meaning quite away.

NOTES.

Ver. 112. *Some on the leaves*] The *first* are the apes of those learned *Italian* critics who, at the restoration of letters, having found the classic writers miserably deformed by the hands of monkish librarians, very commendably employed their pains and talents in restoring them to their native purity. The *second*, the plagiaries from those French critics, who had made some admirable commentaries on the ancient critics. But that *acumen* and *taste*, which separately constitute the distinct value of those two species of Italian and French criticism, make no part of these paltry mimics at home, described by our poet in the following lines,

"*These* leave their sense, their learning to display,
And *those* explain the meaning quite away."

which species is the least hurtful, the poet has enabled us to determine in the lines with which he opens his poem.

"But of the two, less dangerous is the offence,
To tire our patience, than mislead our sense."

Warburton.

He has too frequently expressed an idle contempt of the Heinsiuses, Burmans, Gronoviuses, Reiskius's, Marklands, and Gesners; and other searchers into various readings, who have done so much towards settling the texts of ancient authors. *Warton.*

Ver. 115. *Write dull*] Perhaps he glanced at Bossu's famous Treatise on Epic Poetry, which may have been too much praised. D'Aubignac, under the patronage of Richlieu, wrote a treatise on the drama; and Mambrun on the epopée; but the tragedy of the

You then whose judgment the right course would steer,
Know well each ANCIENT's proper character;
His fable, subject, scope in ev'ry page;
Religion, country, genius of his age:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 118. *You then whose judgment, &c.*] He comes next to the *ancient Poets*, the other and more intimate commentators of Nature. And shews [from ver. 117 to 141.] that the study of these must indispensably follow that of the *ancient Critics*, as they furnish us with what the Critics, who only give us *general rules*, cannot supply: while the study of a great original Poet, in

"His Fable, Subject, scope in ev'ry page:
Religion, Country, genius of his Age;"

will help us to those *particular rules* which only can conduct us safely through every considerable work we undertake to examine; and without which, we may cavil indeed, as the poet truly observes, but can never *criticise*. We might as well suppose that Vitruvius's book alone would make a perfect judge of architecture, without the knowledge of some great master-piece of science, such as the Rotunda at Rome, or the Temple of Minerva at Athens; as that Aristotle's should make *a perfect Judge of Wit*, without the study of Homer and Virgil. These therefore he principally

NOTES.

one, and the Constantine, an epic poem, of the other, were despicable performances, which induced the great Condé to say, "*Je sçais bon gré, à l'Abbé D'Aubignac d'avoir suivi les règles d'Aristote, mais je ne pardonne pas aux règles d'Aristote d'avoir fait faire une si mauvaise tragedie à l'Abbé D'Aubignac.* *Warton.*

Ver. 119. *Know well each* ANCIENT's *proper character;*] When Perault impotently attempted to ridicule the first stanza of the first Olympic of Pindar, he was ignorant that the poet, in beginning with the praises of water, alluded to the philosophy of Thales, who taught, that water was the principle of all things; and which philosophy, Empedocles the Sicilian, a contemporary of Pindar, and a subject of Hiero, to whom Pindar wrote, had adopted in his beautiful

Without all these at once before your eyes,
Cavil you may, but never criticize.

COMMENTARY.

cipally recommends to complete the Critic in his art. But as the latter of these Poets has, by superficial judges, been considered rather as a copier of Homer, than an original from nature, our Author obviates that common error, and shews it to have arisen (as often error does) from a truth, *viz.* that *Homer and Nature were the same;* that the ambitious young Poet, though he scorned to stoop at any thing short of Nature, when he came to understand this great truth, had the prudence to contemplate Nature in the place where she was seen to most advantage, collected in all her charms in the clear mirror of Homer. Hence it would follow, that though Virgil studied Nature, yet the *vulgar* reader would believe him to be a copier of Homer; and though he copied Homer, yet the *judicious* reader would see him to be an imitator of Nature: the finest praise which any one, who came after Homer, could receive.

NOTES.

beautiful poem. Homer and the Greek tragedians have been likewise censured, the former for protracting the Iliad after the death of Hector; and the latter, for continuing the Ajax and Phœnissæ, after the deaths of their respective heroes. But the censurers did not consider the importance of burial among the ancients; and that the action of the Iliad would have been imperfect, without a description of the funeral rites of Hector and Patroclus; as the two tragedies, without those of Polynices and Eteocles; for the ancients esteemed a deprivation of sepulture to be a more severe calamity than death itself. It is observable, that this circumstance did not occur to Pope, when he endeavoured to justify this conduct of Homer, by only saying, that as the anger of Achilles does not die with Hector, but persecutes his very remains, the poet still keeps up to his subject, by describing the many effects of his anger, till it is fully satisfied; and that for this reason, the two last books of the Iliad may be thought not to be excrescences, but essential to the poem. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 123. *Cavil you may, but never criticise.*] The author, after this

Be Homer's works your study and delight,
Read them by day, and meditate by night;
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the Muses upward to their spring.
Still with itself compar'd, his text peruse;
And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.
When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work t' outlast immortal Rome design'd,

NOTES.

Ver. 130. *When first young Maro, &c.*] Virg. Eclog. vi.

" Cum canerem reges et prœlia, Cynthius aurem
Vellit."

It is a tradition preserved by Servius, that Virgil began with writing a poem of the Alban and Roman affairs; which he found above his years, and descended, first to imitate Theocritus on rural subjects, and afterwards to copy Homer in Heroic poetry. *P.*

" That Virgil, not only in his general plan, but in most of the subordinate parts, was a close copyist of Homer, is undeniable, whatever be thought of the supposition, that he set out with a design of drawing from the sources of nature, and was diverted from it by the discovery that " Nature and Homer were the same." The modern

VARIATIONS.

this verse, originally inserted the following, which he has however omitted in all the editions:

Zoilus, had these been known, without a name
Had died, and Perault ne'er been damn'd to fame;
The sense of sound Antiquity had reign'd,
And sacred Homer yet been unprophan'd.
None e'er had thought his comprehensive mind
To modern customs, modern rules confin'd;
Who for all ages writ, and all mankind. *P.*

Ver. 130.]

When first young Maro sung of Kings and Wars,
Ere warning Phœbus touch'd his trembling ears.

Perhaps he seem'd above the Critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountain scorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine ev'ry part he came,
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.
Convinc'd, amaz'd, he checks the bold design:
And rules as strict his labour'd work confine,
As if the Stagyrite o'erlook'd each line.

NOTES.

modern idolatry of Shakspeare has elevated him to the same degree of authority among us; and critics have not been wanting, who have confidently drawn from his characters the proofs and illustrations of their theories on the human mind. But what can be more unworthy of the true critic and philosopher, than such an implicit reliance on any man, how exalted soever his genius, especially on those who lived in the infancy of their art? If an epic poem be a representation of nature in a course of heroic action, it must be susceptible of as much variety as nature herself: and surely it is more desirable that a poet of original genius should give full scope to his inventive powers, under the restriction of such laws only as are founded on nature, than that he should fetter himself with rules derived from the practice of a predecessor. When Pope praises the ancient rules for composition, on the ground that they were "discovered, not devised," and were only "nature methodized," he gives a just notion of what they ought to be. But when he supposes Virgil to have properly "checked in his bold design of drawing from Nature's fountains," and in consequence, to have confined his work within rules as strict,

"As if the Stagyrite o'erlook'd each line;"

how can he avoid the force of his own ridicule, where a little further, in this very piece, he laughs at Dennis for

"Concluding all were desp'rate sots and fools
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules?"

Such are the inconsistencies of a writer who sometimes utters notions derived from reading and education; sometimes, the suggestions of native good sense!"—Dr. Aikin's Letters to his Son.

Warton.

Ver. 138. *As if the Stagyrite*] According to a fine precept in the

Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.
Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 141. *Some beauties yet no precepts can declare, &c.*] Our author, in these two general directions for studying *Nature* and her *Commentators*, having considered Poetry as it is, or may be reduced to *Rule;* lest this should be mistaken as sufficient to attain PERFECTION either in *writing* or *judging*, he proceeds [from ver. 140 to 201.] to point up to those *sublimer* beauties which *Rules* will never reach, nor enable us either to *execute* or *taste:* beauties, which rise so high above all precept as not even to be *described* by it: but being entirely the gift of Heaven, Art and Reason have no further share in them than just to regulate their operations. These *Sublimities* of Poetry (like the *Mysteries* of Religion, some of which are above Reason, and some contrary to it) may be divided into two sorts, such as are *above* Rules, and such as are *contrary* to them.

NOTES.

the fourteenth section of Longinus, who exhorts us, when we aim at any thing elevated and sublime, to ask ourselves while we are composing, "how would Homer, or Plato, or Demosthenes, have exerted and expressed themselves on this subject? And still more, if we should continue to ask ourselves; what would Homer or Demosthenes, if they had been present, and had heard this passage, have thought of it, and how would they have been affected by it?" *Warton.*

Ver. 141. *Some beauties yet no precepts*] Pope in this passage seems to have remembered one of the essays of Bacon, of which he is known to have been remarkably fond. "There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles, or Albert Durer, were the more trifler: whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions; the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made them. Not but I think, a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind

Music resembles Poetry; in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master-hand alone can reach.
If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end,)

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 146. *If, where the rules, &c.*] The *first* sort our author describes [from ver. 145 to 152.] and shews that where a great *beauty* is in the Poet's view, which no stated *Rules* will authorise him how to reach, there, as the purpose of rules is only to attain an end like this, a lucky *Licence* will supply the place of them: nor can the Critic fairly object, since this *Licence*, for the reason given above, has the proper force and authority of a *Rule*.

NOTES.

kind of felicity, as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music, and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them, part by part, you shall find never a good one; and yet altogether do well."

" Non ratione aliquâ (says Quintilian finely) sed motû nescio an inerrabili judicatur. Neque ab hoc ullo satis explicari puto, licet multi tentaverint."—Quintil. Inst. lib. vi. In short, in poetry, we must judge by taste and sentiment, not by rules and reasoning. Different theories of philosophy, and different systems of theology, are maintained and exploded in different ages; but true and genuine pictures of nature and passion, are not subject to such revolutions and changes. The doctrines of Plato, Epicurus, and Zeno; of Descartes, Hobbes, and Malebranche, and Gassendi, yield in succession to each other; but Homer, Sophocles, Terence, and Virgil, being felt and relished by all men, still retain and preserve, unaltered and undisputed, admiration and applause. *Warton.*

Ver. 143. *Music resembles Poetry, &c.*] Dr. Warton has remarked on this passage, that he had been informed by one of the best musicians of the age, that this observation was not accurate, nor agreeable to the rules of the art of music. It is not true, if applied to the rules of *harmonic combinations*, yet the *analogy* between the two arts, which Pope intended to illustrate in the lines before us, is accurate. The most scientific musician will never learn

Some lucky Licence answer to the full
Th' intent propos'd, that Licence is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common track.
Great Wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true Critics dare not mend;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 152. *Great Wits sometimes may gloriously offend, &c.*] He describes next the *second sort*, the beauties *against rule*. And even here, as he observes [from ver. 151 to 161.] the offence is so glorious, and the fault so sublime, that the *true Critic* will not dare either to censure or reform them. Yet still the *Poet* is never to abandon himself to his imagination: the rules laid down for his conduct

NOTES.

learn by rule to introduce those inimitable touches which are to be found in many of the oldest and most artless *melodies*. These can be derived from nature alone, nor will the study of the poetical art *infuse into the soul* that spirit which alone can dictate its happiest efforts. But it is true of both sciences, that a *master-hand*, that is, the hand of one who combines science with genius, can alone reach that height of perfection which is to be obtained by directing the effusions of nature, and reducing them within those rules which are founded on invariable principles. *Bowles.*

Ver. 146. *If, where the rules, &c.*] "Neque enim rogationibus plebisve scitis sancta sunt ista præcepta, sed hoc, quicquid est, Utilitas excogitavit. Non negabo autem sic utile esse plerumque; verum si eadem illa nobis aliud suadebit Utilitas, hanc relictis magistrorum autoritatibus, sequemur."—Quintil. lib. ii. cap. 13. *P.*

Ver. 150. *Thus Pegasus, &c.*] We have observed how the precepts for *writing* and *judging* are interwoven throughout the whole poem. Our Author first describes the sublime flight of a *poet* soaring above all vulgar bounds, to snatch a grace directly which lies

PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Ver. 152. *gloriously offend,*] Dryden's Aurengzebe:

"Mean soul, and dar'st not *gloriously offend!*" *Stevens*

From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,
Which, without passing through the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains.
In prospects, thus, some objects please our eyes,
Which out of nature's common order rise,
The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice.
But tho' the Ancients thus their rules invade,
(As Kings dispense with laws themselves have made,)
Moderns, beware! or if you must offend
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need;
And have, at least, their precedent to plead.

COMMENTARY.

conduct in this respect, are these; 1. That though he transgress the *letter* of some *one particular Precept*, yet that he be still careful to adhere to the end or *spirit* of them *all;* which end is the creation of *one uniform perfect Whole.* And 2. That he have, in each instance, the authority of the *dispensing* power of the Ancients to plead for him. These rules observed, this licence will be *seldom* used, and only when he is *compelled by need:* which will disarm the Critic, and screen the *offender* from his laws.

NOTES.

lies beyond the reach of a common adventurer: and afterwards, the *effect* of that *grace* upon the *true Critic:* whom it penetrates with equal rapidity; going the nearest way to his *heart*, without passing through his *judgment.* By which it is not meant that it could not stand the test of judgment, but that as it was a beauty uncommon and *above rule*, and the judgment habituated to determine only *by rule*, it makes its direct appeal to the heart; which when once gained, soon brings over the judgment, whose concurrence (it being now enlarged and set above forms) is easily procured.

Warburton.

The Critic else proceeds without remorse,
Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.
I know there are, to whose presumptuous thoughts
Those freer beauties, ev'n in them, seem faults.
Some figures monstrous and mis-shap'd appear,
Consider'd singly, or beheld too near,
Which, but proportion'd to their light, or place,
Due distance reconciles to form and grace.
A prudent chief not always must display
His pow'rs, in equal ranks, and fair array,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 169. *I know there are, &c.*] But as some *modern Critics* have pretended to say, that this last reason is only justifying one fault by another, our author goes on [from ver. 168 to 181.] to vindicate the *Ancients;* and to shew that this presumptuous thought, as he calls it, proceeds from mere Ignorance: As where their *partiality* will not let them see that this licence is sometimes necessary for the symmetry and proportion of a perfect whole, in the light, and from the point, wherein it must be viewed: or where their *haste* will not give them time to observe, that a deviation from rule is for the sake of attaining some great and admirable purpose.—These observations are further useful, as they tend to give modern Critics an humbler opinion of their own abilities, and a higher of the Authors they undertake to criticise. On which account he concludes with a fine reproof of their use of that common *proverb* perpetually in the mouths of the critics, *quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*; misunderstanding the sense of Horace, and taking *quandoque* for *aliquando:*

"Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it *Homer nods*, but we that dream."

NOTES.

Ver. 175. *A prudent chief, &c.*] Οἷόν τι ποιοῦσιν οἱ φρόνιμοι στρατηλάται καὶ τὰς τάξεις τῶν στρατευμάτων.—Dion. Hal. De Struct. Orat. *P.*

But with th' occasion and the place comply,
Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.
Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.
Still green with bays each ancient Altar stands,
Above the reach of sacrilegious hands;
Secure from Flames, from Envy's fiercer rage,
Destructive War, and all-involving Age.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 181. *Still green with bays, &c.*] But now fired with the name of *Homer*, and transported with the contemplation of those beauties which a cold Critic can neither see nor conceive, the Poet [from

NOTES.

Ver. 178. *Conceal, &c.*]

——— "Far the greatest part
Of what some call neglect, is study'd art.
When Virgil seems to trifle in a line,
'Tis but a warning piece which gives the sign
To wake your fancy, and prepare your sight
To reach the noble height of some unusual flight."
Roscommon.

Ver. 180. *Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.*] "Modeste, et circumspecto judicio de tantis viris pronunciandum est, ne (quod plerisque accidit) damnent quod non intelligunt. Ac si necesse est in alteram errare partem, omnia eorum legentibus placere, quam multa displicere maluerim."—Quint. *P.*

Ver. 183. *Secure from flames, &c.*] The poet here alludes to the four principal causes of the ravage amongst ancient writings. The destruction of the Alexandrine and Palatine libraries by *fire*, the fiercer rage of *Zoilus*, *Mævius*, and their followers, against wit; the irruption of the *Barbarians* into the Empire; and the long reign of ignorance and superstition in the cloisters. *Warburton.*

Ver. 184. *all-involving Age.*] In his epistle to Addison, Pope has "all-devouring Age," but the epithet here is more original and striking, and admirably suited to the subject. This shews a nice discrimination. "All-involving" would be as improper in the Essay on Medals, as "all-devouring" would be in this place. *Bowles.*

See, from each clime the learn'd their incense bring;
Hear, in all tongues consenting Pæans ring!
In praise so just let ev'ry voice be join'd,
And fill the gen'ral chorus of mankind.
Hail, Bards triumphant! born in happier days;
Immortal heirs of universal praise!
Whose honours, with increase of ages, grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And worlds applaud, that must not yet be found!
O may some spark of your celestial fire,
The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,
(That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights;
Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes,)
To teach vain Wits a science little known,
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own!

COMMENTARY.

[from ver. 180 to 201.] breaks out into a rapturous salutation of the rare felicity of those few Ancients who have risen superior over time and accidents: And disdaining, as it were, any longer to reason with his Critics, offers this as the surest confutation of their censures. Then with the *humility* of a Suppliant at the shrine of Immortals, and the *sublimity* of a Poet participating of their fire, he turns again to these ancient worthies, and apostrophises their Manes:

" Hail, Bards triumphant!" &c.

Ver. 200. *T' admire* superior sense, *and doubt* their own!] This line concludes the first division of the Poem; in which we see the *subject* of the first and second part, and likewise the connexion they have with one another. It serves likewise to introduce the second. The effect of studying the *Ancients*, as here recommended, would be the *admiration of their superior sense;* which, if it will not of itself dispose *Moderns* to a *diffidence of their own* (one of the great uses, as well as natural fruits of that study) our author, to help forward their modesty, in his second part shews them (in a regular

II.

OF all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,

COMMENTARY.

regular deduction of the *causes and effects of wrong Judgment)* their own bright image and amiable turn of mind.

Ver. 201. *Of all the causes &c.*] Having, in the first part, delivered *Rules* for *perfecting the Art of Criticism*, the second is employed in explaining the *Impediments* to it. The order of the two parts was well adjusted. For the causes of wrong Judgment being *Pride, superficial Learning, a bounded Capacity*, and *Partiality*; they to whom this part is principally addressed, would not readily be brought either to see the malignity of the *causes*, or to own themselves concerned in the *effects*, had not the author previously both enlightened and convinced them, by the foregoing observations, on the *vastness of Art, and narrowness of Wit*: the extensive *study of human Nature and Antiquity*; and the *Characters of ancient Poetry* and *Criticism*; the natural remedies to the four epidemic disorders he is now endeavouring to redress.

Ibid. *Of all the causes, &c.*] The first cause of wrong Judgment is PRIDE. He judiciously begins with this, [from ver. 200 to 215.] as on other accounts, so on this, that it is the very thing which gives modern Criticism its character; whose complexion is *abuse* and *censure*. He calls it the vice of *fools*, by which term is not meant, those to whom Nature has given no Judgment (for he is here speaking of what misleads the Judgment) but those to whom learning and study have given more erudition than taste; as appears from the happy similitude of an *ill-nourished body*; where the same words which express the *cause*, express likewise the *nature* of PRIDE:

" For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find
What wants in blood and spirits, swell'd with wind."

'Tis the business of Reason, he tells us, to dispel the *cloud* in which pride involves the mind: but the mischief is, that the rays of reason, diverted by self-love, sometimes *gild this cloud*, instead of *dispelling* it. So that the Judgment, by false lights reflected back upon itself, is still apt to be a little dazzled, and to mistake its object. He therefore advises to call in still more helps:

" Trust

What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is *Pride*, the never-failing vice of fools.
Whatever Nature has in worth denied,
She gives in large recruits of needful Pride;
For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find
What wants in blood and spirits, swell'd with wind:
Pride, where Wit fails, steps in to our defence,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense.

COMMENTARY.

"*Trust not yourself;* but your defects to know,
Make use of ev'ry Friend—*and ev'ry Foe.*

Both the *beginning* and *conclusion* of this precept, are remarkable. The question is of the means to subdue Pride: he directs the Critic to begin with a *distrust of himself;* and this is *Modesty*, the *first* mortification of Pride: and then to seek the assistance of others, and *make use even of an Enemy;* and this is *Humility*, the *last* mortification of Pride: for when a man can once bring himself to submit to profit by an enemy, he has either already subdued his Vanity, or is in a fair way of so doing.

NOTES.

Ver. 206. *She gives in large recruits of needful Pride;*] So in the Essay on Man:

" And each vacuity of sense by *Pride.*"

Ver. 209. *Pride, where Wit fails, steps in to our defence,*
And fills up all the mighty void of sense.]

A very sensible French writer makes the following remark on this species of *Pride:* " Un homme qui sçait plusieurs langues, qui entend les Auteurs Grecs et Latins, qui s'eleve même jusqu'à la dignité de SCHOLIASTE; si cet homme venoit à peser son véritable mérite, il trouveroit souvent qu'il se réduit, avoir eu des yeux et de la mémoire; il se garderoit bien de donner le nom respectable de science à *une erudition sans lumière.* Il y a une grande difference entre s'enrichir des mots ou des choses, entre alleguer des autorités ou des raisons. Si un homme pouvoit se surprendre à n'avoir que cette sorte de mérite, il en rougiroit plûtôt que d'en être vain." *Warburton.*

If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
Make use of ev'ry friend—and ev'ry foe.
A *little learning* is a dang'rous thing; 215
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 215. *A little learning, &c.*] We must here remark the Poet's skill in his disposition of the *causes* obstructing true Judgment. Each *general cause* which is laid down first, has its own *particular cause* in that which follows. Thus, the *second cause* of wrong Judgment, SUPERFICIAL LEARNING, is what occasions that critical *Pride*, which he places first.

Ver. 216. *Drink deep, &c.*] *Nature* and *Learning* are the pole-stars of all true Criticism: but *Pride* obstructs the view of Nature; and a *smattering of letters* makes us insensible of our ignorance. To avoid this ridiculous situation, the Poet [from ver. 214 to

NOTES.

Ver. 213. *defects to know,*] Akenside injured his poem by too much correction. Ariosto, as easy and familiar as he seems to be, made many and great alterations in his enchanting poem. Some of Rochefoucault's Maxims were corrected and new written, more than thirty times. The Provincial Letters of Pascal, the model of good style in the French language, were submitted to the judgment of twelve members of the Port Royal, who made many corrections in them. All that can be said about correction, is contained in these few incomparable words of Quintilian: "Hujus operis est, adjicere, detrahere, mutare. Sed facilius in his simpliciusque judicium, quæ replenda vel dejicienda sunt; premere verò tumentia, humilia extollere, luxuriantia astringere, inordinata dirigere, soluta componere, exultantia coercere, duplicis operæ."—Quint. lib. x. c. 3. *Warton.*

Ver. 213. *your defects to know,*] Gray has "Exact my own defects to scan," and the exact knowledge of our *defects*, in conduct as well as in writing, is perhaps equally difficult to attain. Pope's rule, in either case, is a very good one. He followed it himself, with regard to his antagonist, Dennis. Some faults in this Essay, which Dennis detected, Pope had the good sense to correct. *Bowles.*

There, shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fir'd at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of Arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind,
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanc'd, behold, with strange surprize,
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So, pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,

COMMENTARY.

to 233.] advises, either to drink deep, or not to drink at all; for the least sip at this fountain is enough to make a bad Critic, while even a moderate draught can never make a good one. And yet the labours and difficulties of *drinking deep* are so great, that a young author, "Fir'd with ideas of fair Italy," and ambitious to snatch a palm from Rome, here engages in an undertaking like that of Hannibal: Finely illustrated by the similitude of an inexperienced traveller penetrating through the Alps.

NOTES.

Ver. 225. *So pleas'd, &c.*] Dr. Warton does not agree with Johnson, who says "that this simile is the most apt, the most proper, and most sublime of any in the English language." It is undoubtedly appropriate, illustrative, and eminently beautiful, but evidently copied from Drummond, as Warton observes:

All as a pilgrim who the Alpes doth passe,
Or Atlas' temples crown'd with winter's glasse,
The airy Caucasus, the Apennine,
Pyrene's cliffes where sunne doth never shine,
When he some heapes of hills hath overwent,
Beginnes to think on rest, his journey spent,
Till mounting some tall mountaine he doth finde
More hights before him thann he left behind."

See also Silius Italicus, lib. iii. 528. *Bowles.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 225.

So pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps to try,
Fill'd with ideas of fair Italy,

The

Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But, those attain'd, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect Judge will read each work of Wit
With the same spirit that its author writ:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 233. A *perfect Judge, &c.*] The third cause of wrong Judgment is a NARROW CAPACITY; the natural *cause* of the foregoing defect, *acquiescence in superficial learning*. This *bounded capacity* our Author shews [from 232 to 384.] betrays itself two ways; in its judgment both of the *matter*, and the *manner* of the work criticised: Of the matter, in judging *by parts*, or in having one *favourite part* to a neglect of all the rest. Of the manner, in confining

NOTES.

Ver. 233. *A perfect Judge, &c.*] "Diligenter legendum est ac pæne ad scribendi sollicitudinem: Nec per partes modo scrutanda sunt omnia, sed perlectus liber utique ex integro resumendus." Quint. *P.*

It is observable that our Author makes it almost the necessary consequence of judging by parts, to find fault: And this not without much discernment: For the several parts of a complete Whole, when seen only singly, and known only independently, must always have the appearance of irregularity; often of deformity: because the Poet's design being to create a resultive beauty from the artful assemblage of several various parts into one natural whole; those parts must be fashioned with regard to their mutual relations in the stations they occupy in that whole, from whence the beauty required is to arise: but that regard will occasion so unreducible a form in each part, when considered singly, as to present a very mis-shapen form. *Warburton.*

VARIATIONS.

The Traveller beholds with cheerful eyes
The less'ning vales, and seems to tread the skies.

Survey the WHOLE, nor seek slight faults to find
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;

COMMENTARY.

confining men's regard only to *conceit*, or *language*, or *numbers*. This is our Poet's order: and we shall follow him as it leads us; only just observing one general beauty which runs through this part of the poem; it is, that under each of these heads of *wrong* Judgment, he has intermixed excellent precepts for the *right*. We shall take notice of them as they occur.

He exposes the folly of judging by parts very artfully, not by a direct description of that sort of Critic, but of his opposite, *a perfect judge, &c.* It is observable that our Author makes it almost the necessary consequence of judging *by parts*, TO FIND FAULT: and this not without much discernment: for the several *parts* of a complete *Whole*, when *seen only singly*, and *known only independently*, must always have the appearance of irregularity; often of deformity: because the Poet's design being to *create* a resultive beauty from the artful assemblage of several various *parts* into one natural *whole;* those parts must be fashioned with regard to their mutual relations in the stations they occupy in that *whole*, from whence, the beauty required is to arise: but that *regard* will occasion so unreducible a form in each part, when *considered singly*, as to present a very mis-shapen form.

NOTES.

Ver. 235. *Survey the* WHOLE, *nor seek slight faults to find*
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;]

The second line, in apologizing for those faults which the first says should be overlooked, gives the reason of the precept. For when a great writer's attention is fixed on a general view of Nature, and his imagination becomes warmed with the contemplation of great ideas, it can hardly be, but that there must be small irregularities in the disposition both of matter and style, because the avoiding these requires a coolness of recollection, which a writer so qualified and so busied is not master of. *Warburton.*

According to a most just and judicious observation in the first book of Strabo, "Καθαπερ γε εν τοις κολοσσικοις εργοις, ου το καθ' ὁλω ἑκαστον ακριβως ζητουμεν, αλλα τοις καθ' ὁλω προσεχομεν μαλλον ει εστη καλως το ὁλον· ουτως κ' αν τελοις ποιεισθαι δει την κρισιν." As in great colossal

Nor lose for that malignant dull delight,
The gen'rous pleasure to be charm'd with wit.
But in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,
Correctly cold, and regularly low,
That shunning faults, one quiet tenour keep;
We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep.
In Wit, as Nature, what affects our hearts
Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts;
'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all.
Thus when we view some well-proportion'd dome,
(The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!)

NOTES.

lossal works, we do not seek for exactness and accuracy in every part, but rather attend to the general effect, and beauty of the whole; so ought we to judge of compositions. And, as Quintilian says, Ungues polire, et capillum reponere, is an useless and ill-placed care. *Warton.*

Ver. 247. *Thus when we view.*] This is justly and elegantly expressed. Akenside has nobly succeeded, in speaking of the same subject:

" Mark, how the dread Pantheon stands,
Amid the domes of modern hands!
Amid the toys of idle state,
How simply, how severely great!
Then pause!" *Warton.*

Ver. 248. *The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!*] The Pantheon, I would suppose; perhaps St. Peter's; no matter which; the observation is true of both. There is something very Gothic in the taste and judgment of a learned man, who despises this master-piece of Art, the Pantheon, for those very qualities which deserve our admiration.——" Nous esmerveillons comme l'on fait si grande cas de ce Pantheon, veu que son édifice n'est de si grande industrie comme l'on crie: car chaque petit Masson peut bien concevoir la maniere de sa façon tout en un instant: car es-

No single parts unequally surprize,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes;
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length, appear;
The Whole at once is bold, and regular.
Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 253. *Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,*] He shews next [from ver. 252 to 263.] that to fix our censure on *single parts*, though they happen to *want* an exactness consistent enough with their relation to the rest, is even then very unjust: and for these reasons, 1. Because it implies an expectation of a *faultless piece*, which is a vain fancy. 2. Because no more is to be expected of any work than that it fairly *attains its end:* but the end may be attained, and yet these trivial faults committed: therefore, in spite of such faults, the work will merit that praise that is due to every thing which attains its end. 3. Because sometimes a great beauty is not to be procured, nor a notorious blemish to be avoided, but

NOTES.

tant la base si massive, et les murailles si espaisses, ne nous a semblé difficile d'y adjouster la voute à claire voye." Pierre Belon's Observations, &c. The nature of the Gothic structures apparently led him into this mistake of the Architectonic art in general; that the excellency of it consists in raising the greatest weight on the least assignable support, so that the edifice should have strength without the appearance of it, in order to excite admiration. But to a judicious eye such a building would have a contrary effect, the Appearance (as our poet expresses it) of a monstrous height, or breadth, or length. Indeed did the just proportions in regular Architecture take off from the grandeur of a building, by all the single parts coming united to the eye, as this learned traveller seems to insinuate, it would be a reasonable objection to those rules on which this Master-piece of Art was constructed. But it is not so. The Poet tells us truly,

"The Whole at once is bold and regular." *Warburton.*

In ev'ry work regard the writer's End,
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applausé, in spite of trivial faults, is due.
As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
T' avoid great errors, must the less commit:
Neglect the rules each verbal Critic lays,
For not to know some trifles, is a praise.
Most Critics, fond of some subservient art,
Still make the Whole depend upon a Part:

COMMENTARY.

but by suffering one of these minute and trivial errors. 4. And lastly, because the general *neglect* of them is a *praise*; as it is the indication of a *Genius*, attentive to greater matters.

Ver. 263. *Most Critics fond of some subservient art, &c.*] II. The *second* way in which a *narrow capacity*, as it relates to the *matter*, shews itself, is judging by a *favourite part*. The author has placed this [from ver. 262 to 285.] after the other of judging *by parts*, with great propriety, it being indeed a natural consequence of it. For when men have once left the *whole* to turn their attention to the *separate parts*, that regard and reverence due only to a *whole* is fondly transferred to one or other of its *parts*. And thus we see, that heroes themselves, as well as hero-makers, even kings, as well as Poets and Critics, when they chance never to have had, or long to have lost the idea of that which is the only legitimate object of their office, the care and conservation of the *whole*, are wont to devote themselves to the service of some favourite part, whether it be love of money, military glory, despotic power, &c. *And all*, as our Author says on this occasion,

to

NOTES.

Ver. 258. *in spite of trivial*] As if one was to condemn the divine Paradise Lost, on account of some low puns there introduced; or some passages in Ariosto, on account of vulgar and familiar images and expressions, that have crept into that enchanting and original Poem. *Warton.*

They talk of principles, but notions prize,
And all to one lov'd Folly sacrifice.

Once on a time, La Mancha's Knight, they say,
A certain Bard encount'ring on the way,

COMMENTARY.

" to one lov'd Folly sacrifice."

This general misconduct much recommends that maxim in good Poetry and Politics, *to give a principal attention to the whole:* a maxim which our author has elsewhere shewn to be equally true likewise in *Morals* and *Religion;* as being founded in the order of things: For if we examine we shall find the misconduct here complained of, to arise from this imbecillity of our nature, that the mind must always have something *to rest upon*, to which the passions and affections may be interestingly directed. Nature prompts us to seek it in the most worthy object; and Reason points out to a *Whole*, or *System:* But the false lights which the passions hold out, confound and dazzle us; we stop short; and, before we get to a *Whole*, take up with some *Part;* which thenceforth becomes our favourite.

NOTES.

Ver. 267. *Once on a time, La Mancha's Knight they say,*] By this short tale Pope has shewed us, how much he could have excelled in telling a story of humour. The incident is taken from the Second Part of Don Quixote, first written by Don Alonzo Fernandez de Avellanada, and afterwards translated, or rather imitated and new-modelled, by no less an Author than the celebrated Le Sage. The Book is not so contemptible as some authors insinuate; it was well received in France, and abounds in many strokes of humour and character worthy of Cervantes himself. The brevity to which Pope's narration was confined, would not permit him to insert the following humorous dialogue at length, " I am satisfied you'll compass your design (said the scholar), provided you omit the combat in the lists. Let him have a care of that, said Don Quixote, interrupting him, that is the best part of the plot. But, Sir, quoth the Bachelor, if you would have me adhere to Aristotle's rules, I must omit the combat. Aristotle, replied the Knight, I grant was a man of some parts; but his capacity was not unbounded; and, give me leave to tell you, his authority

Discours'd in terms as just, with looks as sage,
As e'er could Dennis, of the Grecian stage;
Concluding all were desp'rate sots and fools,
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.
Our Author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produc'd his Play, and begg'd the Knight's advice;
Made him observe the subject, and the plot,
The manners, passions, unities; what not?

NOTES.

authority does not extend over combats in the list, which are far above his narrow rules. Would you suffer the chaste queen of Bohemia to perish? For how can you clear her innocence? Believe me, combat is the most honourable method you can pursue; and besides, it will add such grace to your play, that all the rules in the universe must not stand in competition with it. Well Sir Knight, replied the Bachelor, for your sake, and for the honour of chivalry, I will not leave out the combat; and that it may appear the more glorious, all the court of Bohemia shall be present at it, from the Princes of the blood to the very footmen. But still one difficulty remains, which is, that our common theatres are not large enough for it. There must be one erected on purpose, answered the Knight; and in a word, rather than leave out the combat, the play had better be acted in a field or plain."

It may be observed, that there is but one Tale in this essay, nor in Boileau's art, nor Roscommon's essay, and this is superior to the other two. *Warton.*

Ver. 276. *Unities; what not?*] The two unities of time and place have been so powerfully and irresistibly combated by Dr. Johnson (in his Preface to Shakespear), that I do not think a critic will be found hardy enough to undertake a defence of them:

——— Non quisquam ex agmine tanto
Audet adire virum!——

That these unities have, in fact, never been observed by the three Greek writers of tragedy, is demonstrated, at large, in the fifth chapter

All which, exact to rule, were brought about,
Were but a Combat in the lists left out.
"What! leave the Combat out?" exclaims the Knight;
Yes, or we must renounce the Stagirite.
"Not so, by Heav'n!" (he answers in a rage)
"Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the stage."
So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain,
"Then build a new, or act it in a plain."
Thus Critics of less judgment than caprice,
Curious not knowing, not exact but nice,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 285. *Thus Critics of less judgment than caprice,*
Curious *not* knowing, *not* exact *but* nice,
Form short ideas, &c.]

2. He concludes his observations on those *two sorts of* Judges *by parts*, with this general reflection.—The *curious not knowing* are the *first* sort, who judge *by parts*, and with a *microscopic* sight (as he says elsewhere) *examine bit by bit*. The *not exact but nice*, are the *second*, who judge by *a favourite part*, and talk of a *whole* to cover their fondness for a *part*; as Philosophers do of *principles*, in order to obtrude notions and opinions in their stead. But the fate common to both is, to be governed by *caprice* and not by *judgment*; and consequently *to form short ideas*, or to have ideas short

NOTES.

chapter of Metastasio's very judicious work, entitled, Estratto della Poetica D'Aristotile, from page 93 to 119, a work full of taste and judgment, and which comes with double weight from so long and able a practitioner in the dramatic art, many of whose plays are planned with the greatest skill, and who is, on the whole, one of the finest and truest poets Italy has produced. Whoever would thoroughly understand Aristotle, should, in my opinion, very attentively peruse his Estratto. *Warton.*

Ver. 285. *Thus Critics, &c.*] In these two lines the poet finely describes

Form short Ideas; and offend in arts,
(As most in manners) by a love to parts.
Some to *Conceit* alone their taste confine,
And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line;

COMMENTARY.

short of truth: Though the latter sort, through a fondness to their *favourite part*, imagine that it comprehends the *whole* in epitome: As the famous hero of *La Mancha*, mentioned just before, used to maintain, that *Knight Errantry* comprised within itself the quintessence of all Science, civil, military, and religious.

Ver. 289. *Some to Conceit alone, &c.*] We come now to that second sort of *bounded capacity*, which betrays itself in its judgment on the *manner* of the work criticised. And this our Author prosecutes from ver. 288 to 384. These are again subdivided into divers classes.

Ibid. *Some to Conceit alone, &c.*] The *first* [from ver. 288 to 305.

NOTES.

describes the way in which bad writers are wont to imitate the qualities of good ones. As true *judgment* generally draws men out of popular opinions; so he who cannot get from the croud by the assistance of this guide, willingly follows *caprice*, which will be sure to lead him into singularities. Again, true *knowledge* is the art of treasuring up only that which, from its use in life, is worthy of being lodged in the memory: and this makes the *philosopher*. But curiosity consists in a vain attention to every thing out of the way, and which for its inutility the world least regards: and this makes the *antiquarian*. Lastly, exactness is the just proportion of parts to one another, and their harmony in a whole. But he who has not extent of capacity for the exercise of this quality, contents himself with *nicety*, which is a busying oneself about points and syllables: and this makes the *grammarian*.

Warburton.

Ver. 290. *And glittering thoughts*] A rage that infected Marino, Donne, and his disciple Cowley. See Dr. Johnson's excellent Dissertation on Cowley, and his fantastic style, in the first volume of Lives of the Poets. Little can be added to his discussion on false and unnatural thoughts. It is, beyond comparison, the best of all his criticisms. *Bowles.*

Pleas'd with a work where nothing's just or fit;
One glaring Chaos and wild heap of wit.
Poets, like painters, thus, unskill'd to trace
The naked nature, and the living grace,
With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part,
And hide with ornaments their want of art,
True Wit is Nature to advantage dress'd;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;

COMMENTARY.

305.] are those who confine their attention solely to *Conceit* or *Wit*. And here again the Critic *by parts*, offends *doubly* in the *manner*, just as he did in the *matter*: For he not only confines his attention to a *part*, when it should be extended to the *whole*; but he likewise judges *falsely* of that *part*. And this, as the other, is unavoidable; the *parts* in the *manner* bearing the same close relation to the *whole*, that the *parts* in the *matter* do; to which *whole*, the ideas of this Critic have never yet extended. Hence it is, that our Author, speaking here of those who confine their attention solely to *Conceit* or *Wit*, describes the distinct species of *true* and *false* Wit: because they not only mistake *a wrong disposition of true Wit for a right*, but likewise *false Wit for true*: He describes false Wit first, [from ver. 288 to 297.]

"Some to Conceit alone," &c.

Where the reader may observe our Author's address in representing, in a description of *false* Wit, the false disposition of the *true*; as the Critic *by parts* is apt to fall into both these errors.

He next describes *true Wit*, [from ver. 296 to 305.]

"True Wit is Nature to advantage dress'd," &c.

And here again the reader may observe the same beauty; not only an explanation of *true Wit*, but likewise of the *right disposition* of it, which the poet illustrates, as he did the *wrong*, by ideas taken from the art of Painting; in the theory of which he was exquisitely skilled.

NOTES.

Ver. 297. *True Wit is Nature to advantage dress'd, &c.*] This definition is very exact. Mr. Locke had defined wit to consist "in

Something, whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind, 300

NOTES.

" in the assemblage of ideas, and putting those together, with quickness and variety, wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, whereby to make up pleasant pictures and agreeable visions in the fancy." But that great Philosopher, in separating Wit from Judgment, as he does in this place, has given us (and he could therefore give us no other) only an account of Wit in general: In which false Wit, though not every species of it, is included. A striking image therefore of Nature is, as Mr. Locke observes, certainly Wit: But this image may strike on several other accounts, as well as for its truth and beauty; and the Philosopher has explained the manner how. But it never becomes that Wit which is the ornament of true Poesy, whose end is to represent Nature, but when it dresses that Nature to advantage, and presents her to us in the brightest and most amiable light. And to know when the Fancy has done its office truly, the Poet subjoins this admirable test, viz. When we perceive that it gives us back the image of our mind. When it does that, we may be sure it plays no tricks with us: For this image is the creature of the Judgment; and whenever Wit corresponds with Judgment, we may safely pronounce it to be true. " Naturam intueamur, hanc sequamur: id facillime accipiunt animi quod agnoscunt."—Quint. lib. viii. c. 3. *Warburton.*

Ver. 298. *What oft was thought,*] " Pope's account of wit is undoubtedly erroneous; he depresses it below its natural dignity, and reduces it from strength of thought to happiness of language.

" If by a more noble and more adequate conception that be considered as wit, which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is, upon its first production, acknowledged to be just; if it be that, which he that never found it, wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness they were ever found.

" But

'As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.
For works may have more wit than does 'em good,
As bodies perish through excess of blood.
Others for *Language* all their care express,
And value books, as women men, for dress:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 305. *Others for* Language, *&c.*] He proceeds secondly to those contracted Critics, whose whole concern turns upon *Language*

NOTES.

" But wit, abstracted from its effects upon the hearer, may be more vigorously and philosophically considered as a kind of discordia concors; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Of wit, thus defined, they have more than enough. The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions; their learning instructs, and their subtilty surprises; but the reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought, and, though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased.

" From this account of their compositions it will be readily inferred, that they were not successful in representing or moving the affections. As they were wholly employed on something unexpected and surprising, they had no regard to that uniformity of sentiment which enables us to conceive and to excite the pains and the pleasures of other minds; they never inquired what, on any occasion, they should have said or done; but wrote rather as beholders than partakers of human nature; as beings looking upon good and evil, impassive and at leisure, as Epicurean deities, making remarks on the actions of men, and the vicissitudes of life, without interest and without emotion. Their courtship was void of fondness, and their lamentation of sorrow. Their wish was only to say what they hoped had never been said before."

Johnson.

Ver. 302. *modest plainness*] Xenophon in Greek, and Cæsar in Latin, are the unrivalled masters of the beautiful simplicity here recommended.

Their praise is still,—The Style is excellent;
The Sense, they humbly take upon content.
Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found:
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place;

COMMENTARY.

guage, and shews [from ver. 304 to 337.] that this quality, where it holds the principal place in a work, *deserves no commendation*; 1. Because it excludes qualities more essential. And when the abounding Verbiage has choked and suffocated the sense, the writer will be obliged to varnish over the mischief with all the false colouring of eloquence. 2. Secondly, because the Critic who busies himself with this quality alone, is *unable to make a right Judgment* of it; because *true Expression* is only the dress of thought; and so must be perpetually varied according to the subject, and manner of treating it. But those who never concern themselves with the *Sense*, can form no judgment of the correspondence between *that* and the *Language*.

" Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable," &c.

Now as these Critics are ignorant of this correspondence, their whole judgment in language is reduced to verbal criticism, or the examination of *single words*; and generally those which are most to his taste, are (for an obvious reason) such as smack most of antiquity: on which account our author has bestowed a little raillery upon it; concluding with a short and proper direction concerning the *use of words*, so far as regards their *novelty* and *ancientry*.

NOTES.

recommended. We have no English, French, or Italian Writer that can be placed in the same rank with them, for this uncommon excellence. *Warton.*

Ver. 311. *False eloquence, &c.*] This simile is beautiful. For the *false colouring* given to objects by the prismatic glass, is owing to its untwisting by its *obliquities*, those threads of light which nature had put together, in order to spread over its work an ingenious and simple *candour*, that should not hide but only heighten the

The face of Nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay:
But true Expression, like th' unchanging Sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable;
A vile conceit in pompous words express'd
Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd:
For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,
As sev'ral garbs with country, town, and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;

NOTES.

the native complexion of the objects. And *false Expression* is nothing else but the straining and *divaricating* the parts of *true Expression;* and then daubing them over with what the Rhetoricians very properly term *Colours*, in lieu of that candid light, now lost, which was reflected from them in their natural state, while sincere and entire. *Warburton.*

Ver. 324. *Some by old words, &c.*] "Abolita et abrogata retinere, insolentiæ cujusdam est, et frivolæ in parvis jactantiæ." Quint. lib. i. c. 6.

"Opus est, ut verba à vetustate repetita neque crebra sint, neque manifesta, quia nil est odiosius affectatione, nec utique ab ultimis repetita temporibus. Oratio cujus summa virtus est perspicuitas, quam sit vitiosa, si egeat interprete? Ergo ut novorum optima erunt maxime vetera, ita veterum maxima nova."—Idem. *P.*

Quintilian's advice on this subject is as follows: "Cum sint autem verba propria, ficta, translata; propriis dignitatem dat antiquitas. Namque et sanctiorem, et magis admirabilem reddunt orationem, quibus non quilibet fuit usurus: eoque ornamento acerrimi judicii Virgilius unice est usus.

"The language of the age (says Mr. Gray, admirably well,) is never the language of poetry; except among the French, whose verse,

Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.
Unlucky, as Fungoso in the Play,
These sparks with aukward vanity display
What the fine gentleman wore yesterday;
And but so mimic ancient wits at best,
As apes our grandsires, in their doublets drest.
In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold;
Alike fantastic, if too new, or old:
Be not the first by whom the new are try'd,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

NOTES.

verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost every one that has written, has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives: nay, sometimes words of their own composition or invention. Shakespear and Milton have been great creators this way; and no one more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions from the former. Let me give you some instances from Dryden, whom every body reckons a great master of our poetical tongue. Full of *museful mopings*,—unlike the *trim of love*, —a *pleasant beverage*,—a *roundelay of love*,—*stood silent in his mood*,—*with knots and knares deformed*,—his *ireful mood*,—in *proud array*,—his *boon was granted*,—and *disarray and shameful rout*,—*wayward but wise*,—*furbished for the field*,—*the foiled dodderd oaks, disherited*,—*smouldring flames*,—*retchless of laws*,—*crones old and ugly*,—*the beldam at his side*,—*the grandam hag*,—*villanize his father's fame*.—But they are infinite; and our language not being a settled thing (like the French), has an undoubted right to words of an hundred years old, provided antiquity have not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shakespear's language is one of his principal beauties; and he has no less advantage over your Addisons and Rowes in this, than in those great excellencies you mention. Every word in him is a picture." *Warton.*

Ver. 328. *Unlucky, as Fungoso, &c.*] See Ben. Jonson's Every Man out of his Humour. *P.*

But most by Numbers judge a Poet's song,
And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong:
In the bright Muse, tho' thousand charms conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 337. *But most by* Numbers *judge, &c.*] The last sort are those [from ver. 336 to 384.] whose ears are attached only to the *Harmony* of a poem. Of which they judge as ignorantly and as perversely as the other sort did of the Eloquence, and for the same reason. Our Author *first* describes that *false Harmony* with which they are so much captivated; and shews that it is wretchedly *flat* and *unvaried:* for

" Smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong."

He then describes the *true.* 1. As it is in *itself, constant;* with a happy mixture of *strength* and *sweetness,* in contradiction to the *roughness* and *flatness* of false harmony: And 2. as it is *varied* in compliance to the *subject,* where the *sound becomes an echo to the sense,* so far as is consistent with the preservation of numbers; in contradiction to the *monotony* of false harmony: of this he gives us, in the delivery of his precepts, four beautiful examples of *smoothness, roughness, slowness,* and *rapidity.* The *first* use of this correspondence of the *sound* to the *sense,* is to aid the fancy in acquiring a perfecter and more lively image of the thing represented. A *second* and nobler, is to calm and subdue the turbulent and selfish passions, and to raise and warm the beneficent: which he illustrates in the famous adventure of *Timotheus* and *Alexander;* where, in referring to Mr. *Dryden*'s Ode on that subject, he turns it to a high compliment on his favourite Poet.

NOTES.

Ver. 337. *But most by Numbers, &c.*]

" Quis populi sermo est? quis enim? nisi carmine molli
Nunc demum numero fluere, ut per læve severos
Effundat junctura ungues: scit tendere versum
Non secus ac si oculo rubricam dirigat uno."

Pers. Sat. i. *P.*

Having described the causes of false judgment in Critics who judge

Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds; as some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,
Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire;
While expletives their feeble aid do join;
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:
While they ring round the same unvary'd chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rhymes;

NOTES.

judge by *parts* only of a poem, who confine their taste to CONCEITS, or to *language* instead of sense; he proceeds to speak of those who judge merely by *numbers*.

Ver. 345. *Tho' oft the ear, &c.*] "Fugiemus crebras vocalium concursiones, quæ vastam atque hiantem orationem reddunt." Cic. ad Heren. lib. iv. Vide etiam Quintil. lib. ix. c. 4. *P.*

"Non tamen (says the sensible Quintilian) id ut crimen ingens expavescendum est; ac nescio negligentia in hoc, an solicitudo sit major; nimiosque non immeritò in hâc curâ putant omnes Isocratem secutos, præcipuèque Theopompum. At Demosthenes et Cicero modicè respexerunt ad hanc partem."—Quintil. lib. ix. c. 9. *Warton.*

Ver. 347. *ten low words*] Our language is thought to be overloaded with monosyllables; Shaftesbury, we are told, limited their number to nine in any sentence; Quintilian condemns too great a concourse of them; etiam monosyllaba, si plura sunt, malè continuabuntur; quia necesse est compositio, multis clausulis concisa, subsultet.—Inst. lib. ix. c. 4. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 346. *While expletives their feeble aid do join,*
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:]
From Dryden. "He creeps along with ten little words in every line, and helps out his numbers with [for] [to] and [unto] and all the pretty expletives he can find, while the sense is left half tired behind it."—Essay on Dram. Poetry.

But there are many lines of monosyllables that have much force and energy; in our author himself, as well as Dryden. *Warton.*

Where-e'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"
In the next line, it "whispers through the trees:"
If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with "sleep:"
Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow;
And praise the easy vigour of a line,
Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.

NOTES.

356. *A needless Alexandrine, &c.*] Dr. Johnson requires in an Alexandrine a pause invariably at the sixth syllable, and objects to a line of Dryden, where this rule is neglected. Johnson did not perceive that the very line he objected to was as striking an instance of the *sound* being an *echo to the sense*, as the English language perhaps produces, in as much as it represents the thing described, has not the least appearance of studied art, and is full, majestic, and *sonorous*. The line is

"And with paternal thunder vindicates his throne."

And its effect is owing to the violation of that very rule which Johnson thinks essential to lines of this description. *Bowles.*

Ver. 362. *True ease*] Writers who seem to have composed with the greatest ease, have exerted much labour in attaining this facility. Virgil took more pains than Lucan, though the style of the former appears so natural; and Guarini and Ariosto spent much time in making their poems so seemingly natural and easy. Even Voiture wrote with extreme difficulty, though apparently without any

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an Echo to the sense. 365

NOTES.

any effort; what Tasso says of one of his heroines may be applied to such writers;

" Non so ben dir s'adorna, o se negletta,
Se caso, od arte, il bel volto compose:
Di natura, d'amor, de' cieli amici
Le negligenze sue sono artifici."

It is well known, that the writings of Voiture, of Sarassin, and La Fontaine, were laboured into that facility for which they are so famous, with repeated alterations and many rasures. Moliere is reported to have past whole days in fixing upon a proper epithet or rhyme, although his verses have all the flow and freedom of conversation. " This happy facility (said a man of wit) may be compared to garden-terraces, the expense of which does not appear; and which, after the cost of several millions, yet seem to be a mere work of chance and nature." I have been informed, that Addison was so extremely nice in polishing his prose compositions, that when almost a whole impression of a Spectator was worked off, he would stop the press, to insert a new preposition or conjunction. *Warton.*

Ver. 364. *'Tis not enough, &c.*] The judicious introduction of this precept is remarkable. The poets, and even some of the best of them, have been so fond of the beauty arising from this trivial observance, that their practice has violated the very END of the precept, which is the increase of *harmony;* and so they could but raise an *echo*, did not care whose ears they offended by its dissonance. To remedy this abuse, therefore, our poet, by the introductory line, would insinuate, that *harmony* is always to be presupposed as observed, though it may and ought to be perpetually varied, so as to produce the effect here recommended.

Warburton.

Ver. 364. *no harshness gives offence,*] We are surprised to see the constant attention of the ancients, to give melody to their periods, both in prose and verse; of which so many instances are given in Tully De Oratore, in Dionysius, and Quintilian. Plato many times altered the order of the four first words of his Republic. Cicero records the approbation he met with for finishing

Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;

NOTES.

a sentence with the word cōmprŏbāvit, being a dichoreè. Had he finished it otherwise, he says, it might have been *animo satis auribus non satis.* We may be equally mortified in finding Quintilian condemning the inharmoniousness of many letters with which our language abounds; particularly the letters F, M, B, D; and Dionysius reprobates the letter S. *Warton.*

Ver. 365. *The sound must seem an Echo to the sense.*] Lord Roscommon says,

" The sound is still a *Comment* to the sense."

These are both well expressed, although so differently; for Lord R. is shewing how the sense is assisted by the sound; Mr. P. how the sound is assisted by the sense. *Warburton.*

Ver. 366. *Soft is the strain*] See examples in Clarke's Homer, Iliad i. v. 430; ii. v. 102; iii. v. 337; vi. v. 510; vii. v. 157; viii. v. 210, 551; xi. v. 687, 697, 766; and many others.

These lines are usually cited as fine examples of adapting the sound to the sense. But that Pope has failed in this endeavour has been clearly demonstrated by the Rambler. " The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze must surely be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, distinctly imaged; for it requires very little skill to make our language rough. But in the lines which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified. Why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls, used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they therefore naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 366. *Soft is the strain, &c.*]

" Tum si læta canunt," &c. Vida, Poet. l. iii. ver. 403.

But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar:
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow:
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main,
Hear how Timotheus' vary'd lays surprize,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!
While at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love;

NOTES.

one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion." Aaron Hill, long before this was published by the Rambler, wrote a letter to Pope, pointing out the many instances in which he had failed to accommodate the sound to the sense, in this famous passage. This rule of making the sound an echo to the sense, as well as alliteration, has been carried to a ridiculous extreme by several late writers. It is worth observing, that it is treated of at length, and recommended by Tasso, p. 168 of his Discorsi del Poema Eroico.

Warton.

Ver. 374. *Hear how Timotheus', &c.*] See Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music; an Ode by Mr. Dryden. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 368. *But when loud surges, &c.*]
" Tum longe sale saxa sonant," &c. Vida, Poet. l. iii. v. 388.
Ver. 370. *When Ajax strives, &c.*]
" Atque ideo si quid geritur molimine magno," &c.
Vida, ib. 417.
Ver. 372. *Not so, when swift Camilla, &c.*]
" At mora si fuerit damno, properare jubebo," &c.
Vida, ib. 420.

Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the world's victor stood subdu'd by sound!
The pow'r of Music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was, is DRYDEN now.

Avoid extremes; and shun the fault of such,
Who still are pleas'd too little or too much.
At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence,
That always shews great pride, or little sense:
Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,
Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move;
For fools admire, but men of sense approve:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 384. *Avoid extremes, &c.*] Our Author is now come to the *last cause of wrong Judgment*, PARTIALITY; the parent of the immediately preceding cause, *a bounded capacity:* nothing so much narrowing and contracting the mind as *prejudices* entertained for or against things or persons. This, therefore, as the main root of all the foregoing, he prosecutes at large [from ver. 383 to 474.] First, to ver. 394. he *previously* exposes that capricious turn of mind, which, by running into *Extremes*, either of praise or dispraise, lays the *foundation* of an *habitual partiality*. He cautions therefore both against one and the other; and with reason; for excess of *Praise* is the mark of a bad taste; and excess of *Censure*, of a bad digestion.

NOTES.

Ver. 391. *fools admire, but men of sense approve:*] "This prudish sentence has probably made as many formal coxcombs in literature, as Lord Chesterfield's opinion on the vulgarity of laughter, has among men of high breeding. As a general maxim, it has no foundation whatever in truth.

"Proneness to admiration is a quality rather of temper than of understanding

As things seem large which we through mist descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.
Some foreign writers, some our own despise;
The Ancients only, or the Moderns prize. 395

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 394. *Some foreign writers, &c.*] Having explained the disposition of mind which produces an *habitual partiality*, he proceeds to expose this *partiality* in all the shapes in which it appears both amongst the *unlearned* and the *learned*.

I. In the *unlearned* it is seen, *first*, In an unreasonable fondness for

NOTES.

understanding; and if it often attends light minds, it is also inseparable from that warmth of imagination which is requisite for the strong perception of what is excellent in art or nature. Innumerable instances might be produced of the rapturous admiration with which men of genius have been struck at the view of great performances. It is enough here to mention the poet's favourite critic, Longinus, who is far from being contented with cool approbation, but gives free scope to the most enraptured praise. Few things indicate a mind more unfavourably constituted for the fine arts, than a slowness in being moved to the admiration of excellence; and it is certainly better that this passion should at first be excited by objects rather inadequate, than that it should not be excited at all."—Aikin. *Warton.*

Ver. 394. *our own despise;*] If any proof was wanting how little the Paradise Lost was read and attended to, at this time, our author's total silence on the subject would be sufficient to shew it. That an Essay on Criticism could be written without a single mention of Milton, appears truly strange and incredible; if we did not know that our author seems to have had no idea of any merit superior to that of Dryden! and had no relish for an author, who,

" —— Omnes
Extinxit stellas, exortus uti ætherius sol." Lucret.
Warton.

Ver. 395. *The Ancients only,*] A very sensible Frenchman says, " En un mot, touchez comme Euripide, étonnez comme Sophocle, peignez

Thus Wit, like Faith, by each man is apply'd
To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside.
Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
And force that sun but on a part to shine,
Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,
But ripens spirits in cold northern climes;
Which from the first has shone on ages past,
Enlights the present, and shall warm the last;

COMMENTARY.

for, or aversion to, our *own* or *foreign*, to *ancient* or *modern* writers. And as it is the *mob* of unlearned readers he is here speaking of, he exposes their folly in a very apposite similitude:

" Thus Wit, like Faith, by each man is apply'd
To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside."

But he shews [from ver. 396 to 408.] that these Critics have as wrong notions of *Reason* as those bigots have of *God:* for that Genius is not confined to times or climates; but, as the common gift of Nature, is extended throughout all ages and countries: that indeed this intellectual light, like the material light of the Sun, may not shine at all times, and in every place with equal splendour; but be sometimes *clouded* with popular ignorance; and sometimes again *eclipsed* by the discountenance of the Great; yet it shall still recover itself; and, by breaking through the strongest of these impediments, manifest the eternity of its nature.

NOTES.

peignez comme Homere, et composez d'après vous. Ces maîtres n'ont point eu de règles; ils n'en ont été que plus grands; et ils n'ont acquis le droit de commander, que parce qu'ils n'ont jamais obei. Il en est tout autrement en literature qu'en politique; le talent qui a besoin de subir des loix, n'en donnera jamais."

Warton.

Ver. 402. *Which from the first, &c.*] Genius is the same in all ages; but its fruits are various, and more or less excellent as they are checked or matured by the influence of government or religion upon them. Hence in some parts of literature the Ancients excel;

Tho' each may feel encreases and decays,
And see now clearer and now darker days,
Regard not then if Wit be old or new,
But blame the false, and value still the true.
Some ne'er advance a Judgment of their own,
But catch the spreading notion of the Town;
They reason and conclude by precedent,
And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.
Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then
Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.
Of all this servile herd, the worst is he
That in proud dulness joins with Quality.
A constant Critic at the great man's board,
To fetch and carry nonsense for my Lord.
What woeful stuff this madrigal would be,
In some starv'd hackney sonneteer, or me?
But let a Lord once own the happy lines,
How the wit brightens! how the stile refines!

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 408. *Some ne'er advance a judgment of their own,*] A *second* instance of *unlearned partiality*, is, (as he shews from ver. 407 to 424.) men's going always along with the *cry*, as having no fixed nor well grounded principles whereon to raise any judgment of their own. A *third* is reverence for *names*; of which sort, as he well observes, the worst and vilest are the idolizers of *names of quality*; whom therefore he stigmatizes as they deserve. Our Author's temper as well as his judgment is here seen, in throwing this species of partiality amongst the *unlearned* Critics: His affection for letters would not suffer him to conceive, that any *learned* Critic could ever fall into so low a prostitution.

NOTES.

cel; in others, the Moderns; just as those accidental circumstances occurred. *Warburton.*

Ver. 420. *let a Lord*] "You ought not to write verses, (said George

Before his sacred name flies ev'ry fault,
And each exalted stanza teems with thought!
The Vulgar thus through Imitation err;
As oft the Learn'd by being singular; 425

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 424. *The Vulgar thus—As oft the learn'd—*] II. He comes in the *second place* [from ver. 423 to 452.] to consider the instances of *partiality* in the *learned*. 1. The *first* is *Singularity*. For, as want of principles, in the *unlearned*, necessitates them to rest on the common judgment, as always right: so adherence to false principles (that is, to *notions of their own*) mislead the *learned* into the other extreme of supposing the common judgment always wrong. And as, before, our Author compared those to *Bigots*, who made true faith to consist in believing after others; so he compares these to *Schismatics*, who make it to consist in believing no one ever believed before. Which folly he marks with a lively stroke of humour in the turn of the thought:

"So Schismatics the plain believers quit,
And are but damn'd *for having too much wit.*"

2. The *second* is *Novelty*. And as this proceeds sometimes from *fondness*, sometimes from *vanity;* he compares the one to the *passion for a mistress*, and the other to the *pride of being in fashion:* But the excuse common to both is, the daily improvement of their Judgment:

"Ask them the cause; they're wiser still, they say;
And still *to-morrow's wiser than to-day.*"

Now as this is a plausible pretence for their inconstancy; and our Author has himself afterwards approved of it, as a remedy against obstinacy and pride, where he says, ver. 573.

"But you with pleasure own your errors past,
And *make each day a Critique on the last,*"

he has been careful, by the turn of the expression in this place, to

NOTES.

George the Second, who had little taste, to Lord Hervey,) 'tis beneath your rank; leave such work to little Mr. Pope; it is his trade." But this Lord Hervey wrote some that were above the level of those described here by our author. *Warton.*

So much they scorn the croud, that if the throng
By chance go right, they purposely go wrong:
So Schismatics the plain believers quit,
And are but damn'd for having too much wit.
Some praise at morning what they blame at night;
But always think the last opinion right.
A Muse by these is like a mistress us'd,
This hour she's idoliz'd, the next abus'd;
While their weak heads, like towns unfortify'd,
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.
Ask them the cause; they're wiser still they say;
And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.
Once School-divines this zealous isle o'er-spread;
Who knew most Sentences, was deepest read;

COMMENTARY.

to shew the difference between the pretence and the remedy. For *Time*, considered only as *duration*, vitiates as frequently as it improves: Therefore to expect wisdom as the necessary attendant of length of days, unrelated to *long experience*, is vain and delusive. This he illustrates by a remarkable example; where we see *Time*, instead of becoming wiser, destroying good letters, to substitute school divinity in their place—The genius of which kind of learning; the character of its professors; and the fate, which sooner or later, always attends whatsoever is wrong or false, the poet sums up in those four lines;

" Faith, Gospel, all, seem'd made to be disputed," &c.

And in conclusion, he observes, that perhaps this mischief from love of *novelty*, might not be so great, did it not, along with the *Critic*, infect the *Writer* likewise; who, when he finds his readers disposed to take ready wit on the standard of current folly, never troubles himself to think of better payment.

Faith, Gospel, all, seem'd made to be disputed,
And none had sense enough to be confuted:
Scotists and Thomists, now, in peace remain,
Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck-lane.

NOTES.

Ver. 444. *Scotists*] So denominated from Johannes Duns Scotus. Erasmus tells us, an eminent Scotist assured him, that it was impossible to understand one single proposition of this famous Duns, unless you had his whole metaphysics by heart. This hero of incomprehensible fame suffered a miserable reverse at Oxford in the time of Henry VIII. That grave antiquary, Mr. Antony Wood (in the Vindication of himself and his writings from the reproaches of the Bishop of Salisbury), sadly laments the *deformation*, as he calls it, of that University, by the King's Commissioners; and even records the blasphemous speeches of one of them, in his own words—"We have set Duns in Boccardo, with all his blind Glossers, fast nailed up upon posts in all common houses of easement." Upon which our venerable Antiquary thus exclaims: "If so be, the Commissioners had such disrespect for that most famous author, J. Duns, who was so much admired by our predecessors, and so difficult to be understood, that the Doctors of those times, namely, Dr. William Roper, Dr. John Keynton, Dr. William Mowse, &c. professed, that, in twenty-eight years study, they could not understand him rightly, what then had they for others of inferior note?"—What indeed! But if so be, that most famous J. Duns was so difficult to be understood (for that this is a most theologic proof of his great worth, is past all doubt), I should conceive our good old Antiquary to be a little mistaken. And that the nailing up this Proteus of the Schools was done by the Commissioners in honour of the most famous Duns: There being no other way of catching the sense of so slippery and dodging an Author, who had eluded the pursuit of three of their most renowned Doctors in full cry after him, for eight and twenty years together. And this Boccardo in which he was confined, seemed very fit for the purpose; it being observed, that men are never more serious and thoughtful than in that place of retirement. Scribl. *Warburton.*

Ver. 444. *Thomists*] From Thomas Aquinas, a truly great genius,

If Faith itself has diff'rent dresses worn,
What wonder modes in Wit should take their turn?
Oft, leaving what is natural and fit,
The current folly proves the ready wit;

NOTES.

nius, who, in those blind ages, was the same in theology, that our Friar Bacon was in natural philosophy; less happy than our countryman in this, that he soon became surrounded with a number of dark Glossers, who never left him till they had extinguished the radiance of that light, which had pierced through the thickest night of Monkery, the thirteenth century, when the Waldenses were suppressed, and Wickliffe not yet risen. *Warburton.*

The Summa summæ, &c. of Thomas Aquinas, is a treatise well deserving a most attentive perusal, and contains an admirable view of Aristotle's Ethics.

Aquinas did not understand Greek; what he knew of Aristotle he got from Averroes, an Arabian, whom the Spanish Jews first translated into Hebrew, and from Hebrew into Latin. *Warton.*

Ver. 445. *Amidst their kindred cobwebs*] Were common sense disposed to credit any of the Monkish miracles of the dark and blind ages of the Church, it would certainly be one of the seventh century, recorded by honest Bale. "In the sixth general council (says he) holden at Constantinople, Anno Dom. 680, contra Monothelitas, where the Latin Mass was first approved, and the Latin ministers deprived of their lawful wives, spiders' webbs, in wonderfull copye were seen falling down from above, upon the heads of the people, to the marvelous astonishment of many."—The justest emblem and prototype of School Metaphysics, the divinity of Scotists and Thomists, which afterwards fell, in wonderfull copye on the heads of the people, in support of Transubstantiation, to the marvelous astonishment of many, as it continues to do to this day. *Warton.*

Ver. 445. *Duck-lane.*] A place where old and second-hand books were sold formerly, near Smithfield. *P.*

Ver. 448. *Oft, leaving what is natural*] Ita comparatum est humanum ingenium, ut optimarum rerum satietate, defatigetur. Unde

And authors think their reputation safe, 450
Which lives as long as fools are pleas'd to laugh.
Some valuing those of their own side or mind,
Still make themselves the measure of mankind:

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 452. *Some valuing those of their own side or mind, &c.*] 3. The *third* and last instance of *partiality* in the *learned*, is *Party* and *Faction*. Which is considered from ver. 451 to 474, where he shews how men of this turn deceive themselves, when they load a writer

NOTES.

Unde fit, artes, necessitatis vi quâdam crescere, aut decrescere semper, et ad summum fastigium evectas, ibi non diu posse consistere. Thus music, deserting simple and pathetic expression, is taken up with tricks of execution, and a sort of slight of hand. Thus Borromini, to be new and original, has, as Mr. Walpole expresses it, twisted and curled architecture, by inverting the volutes of the Ionic order. L'ennui du Beau, amene le gout du Singulier. This will happen in every country, every art, and every age. *Warton.*

Ver. 450. *And authors think, &c.*] This is an admirable satire on those called *Authors in fashion*, the men who get the laugh on their side. He shews on how pitiful a basis their reputation stands, the changeling disposition of fools to laugh, who are always carried away with the last joke. *Warburton.*

Ver. 451. *as long as fools*] "Mirabile est (says Tully De Oratore,

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 447. Between this and ver. 452.

The rhyming clowns that gladded Shakespear's age,
No more with crambo entertain the stage;
Who now in anagrams their patron praise,
Or sing their mistress in acrostic lays?
Ev'n pulpits pleas'd with merry puns of yore;
Now all are banish'd to th' Hibernian shore!
Thus leaving what was natural and fit,
The current folly prov'd their ready wit;
And authors thought their reputation safe,
Which liv'd as long as fools were pleas'd to laugh.

Fondly we think we honour merit then,
When we but praise ourselves in other men.
Parties in Wit attend on those of State,
And public faction doubles private hate.
Pride, Malice, Folly, against Dryden rose,
In various shapes of Parsons, Critics, Beaus;

COMMENTARY.

a writer of their own side with commendation. They fancy they are paying tribute to *merit*, when they are only sacrificing to *self-love*. But this is not the worst. He further shews, that this *party-spirit* has often very ill effects on Science itself; while, in support of *Faction*, it labours to depress some rising genius, that was, perhaps, raised by nature, to enlighten his age and country. By which he would insinuate, that all the baser and viler passions seek refuge, and find support in *party-madness*.

NOTES.

Oratore, lib. iii.) quum plurimum in faciendo inter doctum et rudem, quàm non multum differant in judicando."

Horace and Milton declare against general approbation, and wish for "*fit audience though few*." And Tully relates, in his Brutus, the story of Antimachus, who, when his numerous auditors all gradually left him, except Plato, said, I still continue reading my work; Plato, enim mihi unus instar est omnium. The noble confidence and strength of mind in Milton, is not in any circumstance more visible and more admirable, than his writing a poem in a style and manner that he was sure would not be relished or regarded by his corrupt contemporaries.

He was different in this respect from Bernardo Tasso, the father of his beloved Torquato, who, to satisfy the vulgar taste and current opinions of his country, new-modelled his epic poem Amadigi, to make it more wild and romantic, and less suited to the rules of Aristotle. *Warton.*

Ver. 459. *shapes of Parsons, Critics,*] The Parson alluded to was Jeremy Collier; the Critic was the Duke of Buckingham; the first of whom very powerfully attacked the profligacy, and the latter the irregularity and bombast of some of Dryden's plays. These attacks were much more than merry jests. *Warton.*

But sense surviv'd when merry jests were past;
For rising merit will buoy up at last.
Might he return, and bless once more our eyes,
New Blackmores and new Milbourns must arise:
Nay, should great Homer lift his awful head,
Zoilus again would start up from the dead.
Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue;
But like a shadow, proves the Substance true:
For envy'd Wit, like Sol eclips'd, makes known
Th' opposing body's grossness, not its own.

NOTES.

Ver. 463. *Milbourn*] The Rev. Mr. Luke Milbourn. Dennis served Mr. Pope in the same office. But these men are of all times, and rise up on all occasions. Sir Walter Raleigh had Alexander Ross; Chillingworth had Cheynel; Milton a first Edwards; and Locke a second; neither of them related to the third Edwards of Lincoln's Inn. They were Divines of parts and learning: this a Critic without one or the other. Yet (as Mr. Pope says of Luke Milbourn) the fairest of all critics; for having written against the Editor's remarks on Shakespear, he did him justice in printing, at the same time, some of his own. *Warburton.*

But all impartial critics allow the remarks to have been decisive and judicious; and his Canons of Criticism remain unrefuted and unanswerable. *Warton.*

Ver. 465. *Zoilus again*] In the fifth book of Vitruvius is an account of Zoilus's coming to the court of Ptolemy at Alexandria, and presenting to him his virulent and brutal censures of Homer, and begging to be rewarded for his work; instead of which, it is said, the king ordered him to be crucified, or, as some said, stoned alive. His person is minutely described in the 11th book of Ælian's various History. *Warton.*

Ver. 468. *For envy'd Wit, &c.*] This similitude implies a fact too often verified; and of which we need not seek abroad for examples. It is this, that frequently those very authors, who have at first done all they could to obscure and depress a rising genius, have

When first that sun too pow'rful beams displays,
It draws up vapours which obscure its rays;
But ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way,
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.
Be thou the first true merit to befriend;
His praise is lost, who stays till all commend.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 474. *Be thou the first, &c.*] The poet having now gone through the last cause of *wrong Judgment*, and the root of all the rest, PARTIALITY; and ended his remarks upon it with a detection of the two rankest kinds, those which arise out of PARTY-RAGE and ENVY; takes the occasion, which this affords him, of closing his *second division* in the most graceful manner, [from ver. 473 to 560.] by concluding from the premises, and calling upon the TRUE CRITIC to be careful of his *charge*, which is the *protection* and *support of Wit*. For, the defence of it from malevolent censure is its true protection; and the illustration of its beauties, is its true support.

He first shews, the Critic ought to do this service without loss of time: and on these motives. 1. *Out of regard to himself:* for there

NOTES.

have at length been reduced to borrow from him, imitate his manner, and reflect what they could of his splendor, merely to keep themselves in some little credit. Nor hath the poet been less artful, to insinuate what is sometimes the *cause*. A youthful genius, like the sun rising towards the meridian, displays *too strong and powerful beams* for the dirty temper of inferior writers, which occasions their *gathering, condensing, and blackening*. But as he descends from the meridian (the time when the sun gives its gilding to the surrounding clouds) his rays grow milder, his heat more benign, and then

" Ev'n those clouds at last adorn its way,
Reflect new glories and augment the day." *Warburton.*

Ver. 474. *Be thou the first true merit to befriend;*
His praise is lost, who stays till all commend.]

When Thomson published his Winter, 1726, it lay a long time neglected, till Mr. Spence made honourable mention of it in his Essay

Short is the date, alas, of modern rhymes,
And 'tis but just to let them live betimes.

COMMENTARY.

there is some merit in giving the world notice of an excellence; but little or none, in pointing, like an *Index*, to the beaten road of admiration. 2. *Out of regard to the Poem:* for the short duration of modern works requires, that they should begin to live betimes. He compares the life of *modern Wit*, (which, in a changeable dialect, must soon pass away) and that of the *ancient*, (which survives in an universal language) to the difference between the Patriarchal age and our own: and observes, that while the ancient writings live for ever as it were, in *brass* and *marble*, the modern are but like *Paintings*, which, of how masterly a hand soever, have no sooner gained their requisite perfection by the softening and ripening of their tints, which they do in a very few years, but they begin to fade and die away. 3. Lastly, our Author shews, that the Critic ought in justice, to do this service *out of regard to the Poet*, when he considers the slender dowry the Muse brings along with her: in youth 'tis only a vain and short-lived pleasure; and in maturer years, an accession of care and labour, in proportion to the weight of reputation to be sustained, and of the increase of envy to be opposed: and therefore, concludes his reasoning on this head, with that pathetic and insinuating address to the Critic, from ver. 508 to 526.

" Ah! let not learning," &c.

NOTES.

Essay on the Odyssey; which becoming a popular book, made the poem universally known. Thomson always acknowledged the use of this recommendation; and from this circumstance an intimacy commenced between the critic and the poet, which lasted till the lamented death of the latter, who was of a most amiable and benevolent temper. I have before me a letter of Mr. Spence to Pitt, earnestly begging him to subscribe to the quarto edition of Thomson's Seasons, and mentioning a design which Thomson had formed of writing a descriptive poem on Blenheim; a subject that would have shone in his hands. It was some time after publication, before the Odes of Gray were relished and admired. They were even burlesqued by two men of wit and genius, who, however, once owned to me, that they repented of the attempt. The Hecyra

of

No longer now that golden age appears,
When Patriarch-wits surviv'd a thousand years:

NOTES.

of Terence, the Misanthrope of Moliere, the Phædra of Racine, the Way of the World of Congreve, the Silent Woman of Ben Jonson, were ill received on their first exhibitions. Out of an hundred comedies written by Menander, eight only obtained the prize; and only five of Euripides out of the seventy tragedies he wrote. Our author seems to be eminently fortunate, who never, from his early youth, published a piece that did not meet with immediate approbation, except, perhaps, the first Epistle of the Essay on Man. *Warton.*

Ver. 476. *Short is the date,*] "All living languages are liable to change. The Greek and Latin, though composed of more durable materials than ours, were subject to perpetual vicissitude, till they ceased to be spoken. The former is, with reason, believed to have been more stationary than any other; and indeed a very particular attention was paid to the preservation of it; yet between Spenser and Pope, Hooker and Sherlock, Raleigh and Smollett, a difference of dialect is not more perceptible, than between Homer and Apollonius, Xenophon and Plutarch, Aristotle and Antoninus. In the Roman authors, the change of language is still more remarkable. How different, in this respect, is Ennius from Virgil, Lucilius from Horace, Cato from Columella, and even Catullus from Ovid! The Laws of the Twelve Tables, though studied by every Roman of condition, were not perfectly understood, even by antiquarians, in the time of Cicero, when they were not quite four hundred years old. Cicero himself, as well as Lucretius, made several improvements in the Latin tongue; Virgil introduced some new words; and Horace asserts his right to the same privilege; and from his remarks upon it, appears to have considered the immutability of living language as an impossible thing. It were vain then to flatter ourselves with the hope of permanency to any of the modern tongues of Europe; which, being more ungrammatical than the Latin and Greek, are exposed to more dangerous, because less discernible, innovations. Our want of tenses and cases makes a multitude of auxiliary verbs necessary; and to these the unlearned are not attentive, because they look upon them as the least important parts of language; and hence

Now length of Fame (our second life) is lost,
And bare threescore is all ev'n that can boast;
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,
And such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be.
So when the faithful pencil has design'd
Some bright Idea of the master's mind,
Where a new world leaps out at his command,
And ready nature waits upon his hand:
When the ripe colours soften and unite,
And sweetly melt into just shade and light;
When mellowing years their full perfection give,
And each bold figure just begins to live,

NOTES.

they come to be omitted or misapplied in conversation, and afterwards in writing. Besides, the spirit of commerce, manufacture, and naval enterprize, so honourable to modern Europe, and to Great Britain in particular, and the free circulation of arts, sciences, and opinions, owing, in part, to the use of printing, and to our improvements in navigation, must render the modern tongues, and especially the English, more variable than the Greek or Latin."—Beattie. *Warton.*

Ver. 482. *failing language*] "In England (says an ingenious Italian) the Translation of the Bible is the standard of their language; in Italy the standard is, the Decamerone of Boccacio." *Warton.*

484. *So when, &c.*] This similitude from painting, in which our author discovers (as he always does on that subject) real science, has still a more peculiar beauty, as at the same time that it confesses the just superiority of *ancient* writings, it insinuates one advantage the *modern* have above them; which is this, that in these latter, our more intimate acquaintance with the *occasion of writing*, and with the *manners described*, lets us into those living and striking graces which may be well compared to that perfection of imitation given only by the pencil. While the ravages of time, amongst the monuments of former ages, have left us but the gross substance of ancient wit; so much only of the form and fashion of bodies as may be expressed in brass or marble. *Warburton.*

The treach'rous colours the fair art betray,
And all the bright creation fades away!
  Unhappy Wit, like most mistaken things,
Atones not for that envy which it brings.
In youth alone its empty praise we boast,
But soon the short-liv'd vanity is lost:
Like some fair flow'r the early spring supplies,
That gaily blooms, but ev'n in blooming dies.
What is this Wit, which must our cares employ?
The owner's wife, that other men enjoy;
Then most our trouble still when most admir'd,
And still the more we give, the more requir'd;
Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with ease,
Sure some to vex, but never all to please;
'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun,
By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!
  If Wit so much from Ign'rance undergo,
Ah let not learning too commence its foe!
Of old, those met rewards who could excell,
And such were prais'd who but endeavour'd well:

NOTES.

Ver. 508. *If Wit so much from Ign'rance undergo,*] Boileau going one day to receive his pension, and the treasurer reading these words in his order, "the pension we have granted to Boileau, on account of the satisfaction his works have given us," asked him of what kind were his works; "Of masonry (replied the Poet), I am a builder!" Racine used to relate, that an old magistrate, who had never been at a play, was carried, one day, to his Andromaque. This magistrate was very attentive to the tragedy, to which was added the Plaideurs; and going out of the theatre, he said to the author, "I am extremely pleased, Sir, with your Andromaque: I am only amazed that it ends so gaily; j'avois d'abord eu quelque envie de pleurer, mais la vue des petits chiens m'a fait rire."

Warton.

Though triumphs were to gen'rals only due,
Crowns were reserv'd to grace the soldiers too.
Now, they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown,
Employ their pains to spurn some others down;
And while self-love each jealous writer rules,
Contending wits become the sport of fools:
But still the worst with most regret commend,
For each ill Author is as bad a Friend.
To what base ends, and by what abject ways,
Are mortals urg'd through sacred lust of praise!
Ah ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,
Nor in the Critic let the Man be lost.
Good-nature and good sense must ever join;
To err is human, to forgive, divine.
  But if in noble minds some dregs remain
Not yet purg'd off, of spleen and sour disdain;

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 526. *But if in noble minds some dregs remain, &c.*] So far as to what ought to be the *true Critic*'s principal study and employment. But if the sour critical humour abounds, and must therefore needs have vent, he directs to its proper object; and shews [from ver. 525 to 556.] how it may be innocently and usefully pointed. This is very observable; our author had made *spleen* and *disdain* the characteristic of the false Critic, and yet here supposes them inherent in the *true*. But it is done with judgment, and a knowledge of nature. For as bitterness and astringency in unripe fruits of the best kind are the foundation and capacity of that high spirit, race, and flavour which we find in them when perfectly concocted by the warmth and influence of the sun, and which, without those qualities, would gain no more by that influence than only a mellow insipidity: so spleen and disdain in the true Critic, when improved by long study and experience, ripen into an exactness of judgment and an elegance of taste: although, in the false Critic, lying remote from the influence

Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,
Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.
No pardon vile obscenity should find,
Tho' wit and art conspire to move your mind;
But Dulness with Obscenity must prove
As shameful sure as Impotence in love.
In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and ease,
Sprung the rank weed, and thriv'd with large increase:

COMMENTARY.

ence of good letters, they remain in all their first offensive harshness and acerbity. The Poet therefore shews how, after the exaltation of these qualities into their state of perfection, the very *dregs* (which, though precipitated, may possibly, on some occasions, rise and ferment even in a *noble mind)* may be usefully employed, that is to say, in branding OBSCENITY and IMPIETY. Of these, he explains the rise and progress, in a beautiful picture of the different geniuses of the two reigns of *Charles* II. and *William* III. The former of which gave course to the most *profligate luxury;* the latter to a *licentious impiety.* These are the crimes our author assigns over to the caustic hand of the Critic; but concludes however [from ver. 555 to 560.] with this necessary admonition, to take care not to be misled into unjust censure; either on the one hand, by a pharisaical *niceness,* or on the other by a *self-consciousness* of guilt. And thus the *second division* of his Essay ends: the judicious conduct of which is worthy our observation. The subjects of it are the *causes of wrong judgment:* These he derives upwards from *cause* to *cause,* till he brings them to their source, an *immoral partiality:* For as he had, in the first part,

" trac'd the MUSES upward to their spring,"

and shewn them to be derived from Heaven, and the offspring of virtue; so hath he *here* pursued this enemy of the *Muses,* the BAD CRITIC, to his low original, in the arms of his nursing mother *Immorality.* This order naturally *introduces,* and at the same time shews the *necessity* of, the subject of the third and last division, which is, on the *Morals of the Critic.*

When love was all an easy Monarch's care;
Seldom at council, never in a war:
Jilts rul'd the state, and statesmen farces writ:
Nay wits had pensions, and young Lords had wit:
The fair sate panting at a courtier's play,
And not a mask went unimprov'd away:
The modest fan was lifted up no more,
And virgins smil'd at what they blush'd before.
The following licence of a foreign reign
Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain;
Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,
And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;
Where Heav'n's free subjects might their rights dispute,
Lest God himself should seem too absolute:
Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare,
And Vice admir'd to find a flatt'rer there!
Encourag'd thus, Wit's Titans brav'd the skies,
And the press groan'd with licens'd blasphemies.
These monsters, Critics! with your darts engage,
Here point your thunder, and exhaust your rage!

NOTES.

Ver. 545. *Did all the dregs, &c.*] The seeds of this religious evil, as well as of the political good from whence it sprung (for good and evil are incessantly springing out of one another) were sown in the preceding *fat age of pleasure.* The mischiefs done during Cromwell's usurpation, by fanaticism, inflamed by erroneous and absurd notions of the doctrine of *grace* and *satisfaction*, made the loyal Latitudinarian divines (as they were called) at the Restoration, go so far into the other extreme of resolving all Christianity into *morality*, so as to afford an easy introduction to *Socinianism:* which in that reign (founded on the principles of liberty) men had full opportunity of propagating. *Warburton.*

Yet shun their fault, who scandalously nice,
Will needs mistake an author into vice;
All seems infected that th' infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundic'd eye.

III.

LEARN then what MORALS Critics ought to show,
For 'tis but half a judge's task, to know.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 560. *Learn then, &c.*] We enter now on the *third part*, the MORALS of the *Critic;* included in CANDOUR, MODESTY, and GOOD-BREEDING. This third and last part is in two divisions. In the *first* of which [from ver. 559 to 631.] our author inculcates these *morals* by *precept:* In the *second*, [from ver. 630 to the end] by *example.* His *first* precept [from ver. 561 to 566.] recommends CANDOUR, for its *use to the Critic*, and to the *writer criticised.*

2. The *second* [from ver. 565 to 572.] recommends MODESTY, which manifests itself in these four *signs;* 1. Silence where it doubts,

Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;

2. A seeming diffidence where it knows,

And speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence;

3. A free confession of error where wrong,

But you with pleasure own your errors past;

4. And a constant review and scrutiny even of those opinions which it still thinks right,

And make each day a Critique on the last.

3. The *third* [from ver. 571 to 584.] recommends GOOD-BREEDING, which will not force truth dogmatically upon men, as ignorant of it, but gently insinuates it to them, as not sufficiently attentive to it. But as *men of breeding* are apt to fall into two extremes, he prudently cautions against them. The one is a *backwardness in communicating* their knowledge, out of a false delicacy, and for fear of being thought pedants: The other, and much more

'Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning, join;
In all you speak, let truth and candour shine:
That not alone what to your sense is due
All may allow; but seek your friendship too.
Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;
And speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence:
Some positive, persisting fops we know,
Who, if once wrong, will needs be always so;
But you with pleasure own your errors past,
And make each day a critique on the last.
'Tis not enough your counsel still be true;
Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do;
Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot.
Without good-breeding truth is disapprov'd;
That only makes superior sense belov'd.
Be niggards of advice on no pretence:
For the worst avarice is that of sense.
With mean complacence ne'er betray your trust,
Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.

COMMENTARY.

more common extreme, is a *mean complaisance*, which those who are worthy of your advice do not need, to make it acceptable; for such can best bear reproof in particular points, who best deserve commendation in general.

NOTES.

Ver. 570. *your errors past,*] "Et ipsa emendatio habet finem; sunt enim qui ad omnia scripta, tanquam vitiosa redeunt; et quasi nihil fas sit rectum esse quod primum est, melius existiment quidquid est aliud; idque faciunt quoties librum in manus resumpserint; similes medicis, etiam integra secantibus. Accidit itaque ut cicatricosa sint, et exanguia, et curâ pejora. Sit aliquando quod placeat; aut certè quod sufficiat; ut plus poliat lima, non exterat."—Quintil. lib. 10. *Warton.*

Fear not the anger of the wise to raise;
Those best can bear reproof, who merit praise.
'Twere well might critics still this freedom take,
But Appius reddens at each word you speak, 585

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 584. *'Twere well might critics, &c.*] The Poet having thus recommended in his *general rules of conduct* for the JUDGMENT, these *three critical Virtues to the* HEART; shews next [from ver. 583 to 631.] upon what three sorts of Writers these virtues, together with the advice conveyed under them, would be thrown away; and which is worse, be repaid with obloquy and scorn. These are the *false Critic*, the *dull Man of Quality*, and the *bad Poet;* each of which species of *incorrigible* writers he hath very exactly painted. But having drawn the last of them at full length, and being always attentive to the two main branches of his subject, which are, *of writing* and *judging well*, he re-assumes the character of the *bad Critic*, (whom he had touched upon before) to contrast him with the other; and makes the *characteristic* common to both, to be a never-ceasing *repetition* of their own impertinence.

The Poet—still runs on in a raging vein, &c. ver. 606, &c.
The Critic—with his own tongue still edifies his ears, 614, &c.

NOTES.

Ver. 580. *With mean complacence ne'er betray your trust,*
Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.]

Our Poet practised this excellent precept in his conduct towards Wycherley, whose pieces he corrected with equal freedom and judgment. *Warton.*

Ver. 582. *Fear not the anger of the wise to raise;*] The freedom and unreservedness with which Boileau and Racine communicated their works to each other, is hardly to be paralleled; of which many amiable instances appear in their letters lately published by a son of the latter; particularly in the following: "J'ai trouvé que la Trompette et les Sourds étoient trop joués, et qu'il ne falloit point trop appuyer sur votre incommodité, moins encore chercher de l'esprit sur ce sujet." Boileau communicated to his friend

And stares, tremendous, with a threat'ning eye,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry.
Fear most to tax an Honourable fool.
Whose right it is, uncensur'd, to be dull;
Such, without wit, are Poets when they please,
As without learning they can take Degrees.
Leave dang'rous truths to unsuccessful satires,
And flattery to some fulsome Dedicators,
Whom, when they praise, the world believes no more,
Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er.
'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain,
And charitably let the dull be vain:
Your silence there is better than your spite,
For who can rail so long as they can write?
Still humming on, their drowsy course they keep,
And lash'd so long, like tops, are lash'd asleep.
False steps but help them to renew the race,
As, after stumbling, jades will mend their pace.

NOTES.

friend the first sketch of his Ode on the Taking Namur. It is entertaining to contemplate a rude draught by such a master; and is no less pleasing to observe the temper with which he receives the objections of Racine. " J'ai deja retouché à tout cela; mais je ne veux point l'achever que je n'aie reçu vos remarques, qui sûrement m'élaireront encore l'esprit." *Warton.*

Ver. 586. *And stares, tremendous, &c.*] This picture was taken to himself by John Dennis, a furious old critic by profession, who, upon no other provocation, wrote against this Essay and its author, in a manner perfectly lunatic: For, as to the mention made of him in ver. 270, he took it as a compliment, and said it was treacherously meant to cause him to overlook this abuse of his person. *P.*

What crouds of these, impenitently bold,
In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,
Still run on poets in a raging vein,
Ev'n to the dregs and squeezing of the brain,
Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,
And rhyme with all the rage of Impotence.
Such shameless Bards we have; and yet, 'tis true,
There are as mad, abandon'd Critics too.
The bookful blockhead ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head,
With his own tongue still edifies his ears,
And always list'ning to himself appears.
All books he reads, and all he reads assails,
From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales.
With him most authors steal their works, or buy;
Garth did not write his own Dispensary.
Name a new play, and he's the poet's friend,
Nay show'd his faults—but when would poets mend?
No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,
Nor is Paul's church more safe than Paul's church-yard:

NOTES.

Ver. 619. *Garth did not write, &c.*] A common slander at that time in prejudice of that deserving author. Our Poet did him this justice, when that slander most prevailed; and it is now (perhaps the sooner for this very verse) dead and forgotten. *P.*

Ver. 622. *No place so sacred*] This stroke of satire is literally taken from Boileau:

" Gardez vous d'imiter ce rimeur furieux,
Qui de ses vains écrits lecteur harmonieux
Aborde en récitant quiconque le salue,
Et poursuit de ses vers les passans dans le ruë,

Nay, fly to altars; there they'll talk you dead;
For fools rush in where angels fear to tread.
Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
It still looks home, and short excursions makes;
But rattling nonsense in full vollies breaks,
And never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,
Bursts out, resistless, with a thund'ring tide,
But where's the man, who counsel can bestow,
Still pleas'd to teach, and yet not proud to know?

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 631. *But where's the man, &c.*] II. The *second* division of this last part, which we now come to, is of the Morals of Critics, by *example*. For, having in the first, drawn a picture of the *false Critic*, at large, he breaks out into an apostrophe, containing an

NOTES.

Il n'est Temple si saint, des Anges respecté,
Qui soit contre sa muse un lieu du sûreté."

Which lines allude to the impertinence of a French poet called Du Perrier, who finding Boileau one day at church, insisted upon repeating to him an ode, during the elevation of the host; and desired his opinion, whether or not it was in the manner of Malherbe. Without this anecdote the pleasantry of the satire would be overlooked.

It is but justice to add, that the fourteen succeeding verses in the poem before us, containing the character of a true Critic, are superior to any thing in Boileau's Art of Poetry; from which, however, Pope has borrowed many observations. *Warton.*

Ver. 631. *But where's the man, &c.*] The Poet, by his manner of asking after this Character, and telling us, when he had described

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 623. Between this and ver. 624.

In vain you shrug and sweat and strive to fly:
These know no manners but of Poetry.
They'll stop a hungry Chaplain in his grace,
To treat of Unities of time and place. *Warburton.*

Unbiass'd, or by favour, or by spite;
Not dully prepossess'd, nor blindly right;
Tho' learn'd, well-bred; and tho' well-bred, sincere;
Modestly bold, and humanly severe;

COMMENTARY.

an exact and finished character of the true; which, at the same time, serves for an easy and proper introduction to *this second division.* For having asked [from ver. 630 to 643.] *Where's the man, &c.* he answers [from ver. 642 to 681.] That he was to be found in the happier ages of *Greece* and *Rome;* in the characters of *Aristotle* and *Horace, Dionysius* and *Petronius, Quintilian* and *Longinus;* whose several excellencies he has not only well distinguished, but has contrasted them with a peculiar elegance: the profound science and logical method of Aristotle is opposed to the plain common sense of Horace, conveyed in a natural and familiar negligence: the study and refinement of Dionysius, to the gay and courtly ease of Petronius: and the gravity and minuteness of Quintilian, to the vivacity and general topics of Longinus. Nor has the Poet been less careful in these examples, to point out their eminence in the several *critical Virtues* he so carefully inculcated in his precepts. Thus in Horace he particularizes his Candour; in Petronius his Good-Breeding; in Quintilian his free and copious Instruction; and in Longinus his great and noble Spirit.

NOTES.

scribed it, that such once were Critics, does not encourage us to search for it amongst modern writers. And indeed the discovery of him, if it could be made, would be but an invidious affair. However, I will venture to name the piece of Criticism in which all these marks may be found. It is entitled, Q. Hor. Fl. Ars Poetica, et ejusd. Ep. ad Aug. with an English Commentary and Notes. *Warburton.*

This commentary is founded on the idea that Horace writes, in his Art of Poetry, with systematic order, and the strictest method. An idea to which several capable critics will not accede, and which

is

Who to a friend his faults can freely show,
And gladly praise the merit of a foe?
Blest with a taste exact, yet unconfin'd;
A knowledge both of books and human kind;
Gen'rous converse; a soul exempt from pride;
And love to praise, with reason on his side?
Such once were Critics; such the happy few,
Athens and Rome in better ages knew.
The mighty Stagirite first left the shore,
Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore;

NOTES.

is directly contrary to Pope's own opinion. But it may be added, that Dr. Hurd was not the first who entertained this idea. A French writer, M. de Brueys, gave a paraphrase on this epistle of Horace, in 1683, totally grounded on this supposition. If my partiality to my lamented friend Mr. Colman does not mislead me, I should think his account of the matter the most judicious of any yet published. He conceives that the elder Piso had written or meditated a poetical work, probably a tragedy; and had communicated his piece, in confidence, to Horace; but Horace, either disapproving of the work, or doubting of the poetical faculties of the elder Piso, or both, wished to dissuade him from all thoughts of publication. With this view he wrote his epistle, addressing it with a courtliness and delicacy, perfectly agreeable to his acknowledged character, indifferently to the whole family, the father and his two sons. Epistle to the Pisos, with Notes by George Colman, 4to. 1783, p. 6. *Warton.*

Ver. 642. *with reason on his side?*] Not only on his side, but in actual employment. The Critic makes but a mean figure, who, when he has found out the beauties of his author, contents himself with shewing them to the world in only empty exclamations. His office is to explain their nature, shew from whence they arise, and what effects they produce; or in the better and fuller expression of the Poet,

"To teach the world with reason to admire."

Warburton.

Ver. 645. *The mighty Stagirite*] A noble and just character of the

He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
Led by the light of the Mæonian star.

NOTES.

the first and the best of critics! Whoever surveys the variety and perfection of his productions, all delivered in the chastest style, in the clearest order, and the most pregnant brevity, is amazed at the immensity of his genius. His logic, however at present neglected for those rudiments and verbose systems which took their rise from Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, is a mighty effort of the mind; in which are discovered the principal sources of the art of reasoning, and the dependencies of one thought on another; and where, by the different combinations he hath made of all the forms the understanding can assume in reasoning, which he hath traced for it, he hath so closely confined it, that it cannot depart from them, without arguing inconsequentially. His Physics contain many useful observations, particularly his History of Animals, which Buffon highly praises; to assist him in which, Alexander gave orders, that creatures of different climates and countries should, at a great expense, be brought to him, to pass under his inspection. His Morals are, perhaps, the purest system of antiquity. His Politics are a most valuable monument of the civil wisdom of the ancients; as they preserve to us the description of several governments, and particularly of Crete and Carthage, that otherwise would have been unknown. But of all his compositions, his Rhetoric and Poetics are most excellent. No writer has shewn a greater penetration into the recesses of the human heart, than this

VARIATIONS.

Between ver. 646 and 649. I have found the following lines, since suppress by the author:

That bold Columbus of the realms of wit,
Whose first discovery's not exceeded yet.
Led by the Light of the Mæonian Star,
He steer'd securely, and discover'd far.
He, when all Nature was subdu'd before,
Like his great Pupil, sigh'd and long'd for more:
Fancy's wild regions yet unvanquish'd lay,
A boundless empire, and that own'd no sway.
Poets, &c. *Warburton.*

Poets, a race long unconfin'd, and free,
Still fond and proud of savage liberty,
Receiv'd his laws; and stood convinc'd 'twas fit,
Who conquer'd Nature, should preside o'er Wit.

NOTES.

this philosopher, in the second book of his Rhetoric; where he treats of the different manners and passions that distinguish each different age and condition of man; and from whence Horace plainly took his famous description in the Art of Poetry (ver. 157). La Bruyere, La Rochefoucault, and Montaigne himself, are not to be compared to him in this respect. No succeeding writer on eloquence, not even Tully, has added any thing new or important on this subject. His Poetics, which, I suppose, are here by Pope chiefly referred to, seem to have been written for the use of that prince, with whose education Aristotle was honoured, to give him a just taste in reading Homer and the tragedians; to judge properly of which, was then thought no unnecessary accomplishment in the character of a prince. To attempt to understand poetry without having diligently digested this treatise, would be as absurd and impossible, as to pretend to a skill in geometry without having studied Euclid. The fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters, wherein he has pointed out the properest methods of exciting terror and pity, convince us, that he was intimately acquainted with those objects which most forcibly affect the heart. The prime excellence of this precious treatise is the scholastic precision, and philosophical closeness, with which the subject is handled, without any address to the passions, or imagination. It is to be lamented, that the part of the Poetics in which he had given precepts for comedy, did not likewise descend to posterity.

Warton.

Ver. 652. *Who conquer'd nature, &c.*] By this we must not understand *physical* nature, but *moral*. The force of the observation consists in giving it this sense. The Poet not only uses the word *Nature*, for *human nature*, throughout this poem; but also, where in the beginning of it, he lays down the principles of the arts he treats of, he makes the knowledge of *human nature* the foundation of all Criticism and Poetry. Nor is the observation less true than apposite. For Aristotle's *natural* inquiries were superficial and ill made, though extensive. But his *logical* and *moral* works are supremely

Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
And without method talks us into sense.
Will, like a friend, familiarly convey
The truest notions in the easiest way.
He, who supreme in judgment, as in wit,
Might boldly censure, as he boldly writ,
Yet judg'd with coolness, tho' he sung with fire;
His precepts teach but what his works inspire.
Our Critics take a contrary extreme,
They judge with fury, but they write with flegm:
Nor suffers Horace more in wrong translations
By Wits, than Critics in as wrong quotations.
See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,
And call new beauties forth from ev'ry line!

NOTES.

supremely excellent. In his *moral*, he has unfolded the human mind, and laid open all the recesses of the heart and understanding; and in his *logical*, he has not only *conquered nature*, but by his Categories, has kept her in *tenfold chains;* not as dulness kept the muses in the Dunciad, to silence them; but as Aristæus held Proteus in Virgil, to deliver oracles. *Warburton.*

Ver. 652. *Who conquer'd*] By conquering nature, our Poet certainly meant, was a perfect master of all natural philosophy, as far as it was then understood; in his own manuscript lines quoted above, he uses the expression in the very same sense;

He, when all nature was subdu'd before. *Warton.*

Ver. 665. *See Dionysius, &c.*] In the first of these lines, on which the other depends, the peculiar excellence of this Critic, and indeed the most material and useful part of a Critic's office, is touched upon: who, like *the refiner*, purifies the rich ore of an original writer; for such a one busied in *creating*, often neglects to *separate* and *refine* the mass; pouring out his riches rather in *bullion* than in *sterling*. *Warburton.*

Ver. 665. *See Dionysius*] Of Halicarnassus. *P.*

These prosaic lines, this spiritless eulogy, are much below the merit of the critic whom they are intended to celebrate. Pope

Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,
The scholar's learning, with the courtier's ease.

NOTES.

seems here rather to have considered Dionysius as the author only of reflections concerning Homer; and to have, in some measure, overlooked, or at least not to have sufficiently insisted on, his most excellent book ΠΕΡΙ ΣΥΝΘΗΣΕΩΣ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΩΝ, in which he has unfolded all the secret arts that render composition harmonious. One part of this discourse, I mean from the beginning of the twenty-first to the end of the twenty-fourth section, is, perhaps, one of the most useful pieces of criticism extant. He there discusses the three different species of composition; which he divides into the Nervous and Austere, the Smooth and Florid, and the Middle, which partakes of the nature of the two others. As examples of the first species, he mentions Antimachus and Empedocles in heroics, Pindar in lyric, Æschylus in tragic poetry, and Thucydides in history. As examples of the second, he produces Hesiod as a writer in heroics; Sappho, Anacreon, and Simonides, in lyric; Euripides only among tragic writers; among the historians, Ephorus and Theopompus; and Isocrates among the rhetoricians: all these, says he, have used words that are ΛΕΙΑ καὶ ΜΑΛΑΚΑ, καὶ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΠΑ. The writers which he alleges as instances of the third species, who have happily blended the two other species of composition, and who are the most complete models of style, are Homer in epic poetry; Stesichorus and Alcæus in lyric; in tragic, Sophocles; in history, Herodotus; in eloquence, Demosthenes; in philosophy, Democritus, Plato, and Aristotle. Numberless are the passages which Quintilian has borrowed from this writer; who has lately been brought forward, and perhaps will be more read by being so often referred to, by the learned Lord Monboddo. The treatise, De Structurâ, was admirably well published by Mr. Upton, the editor also of Aristotle's Poetics, printed at Cambridge, under the inspection of Dr. Hare, in the year 1706, and also of Extracts from Ælian, Polyænus, and Herodotus, and of Ascham's Schoolmaster. *Warton.*

Ver. 667. *Fancy and art, &c.*] *The chief merit of Petronius* (says an objector) *is that of telling a story with grace and ease.* But the poet is not here speaking, nor was it his purpose to speak, of the *chief merit of Petronius*, but of his merit as a Critic, which consisted

In grave Quintilian's copious work, we find
The justest rules, and clearest method join'd: 670

NOTES.

sisted, he tells us, in softening the *art* of a scholar with the *ease* of a courtier. And whoever reads and understands, the critical part of his abominable *story-telling*, will see that the Poet has given his true character as a critic, which was the only thing he had to do with. *Warburton.*

Ver. 667. *Petronius please,*] This dissolute and effeminate writer little deserved a place among good critics, for only two or three pages on the subject of criticism. His fragment on the Civil War is far below Lucan, whom he endeavoured to blame and to excel. Sir George Wheeler, esteemed an accurate traveller, informs us, that he saw at Trau, in the hands of a Doctor Statelius, a fragment of Petronius, in which the account of the Supper of Trimalcion was entire. Yet this fragment has been judged to be spurious. *Warton.*

Ver. 669. *In grave Quintilian's copious work*] To commend Quintilian barely for his method, and to insist merely on this excellence, is below the merit of one of the most rational and elegant of Roman writers. Considering the nature of Quintilian's subject, he afforded copious matter for a more appropriate and poetical character. No author ever adorned a scientifical treatise with so many beautiful metaphors. Quintilian was found in the bottom of a tower of the monastery of St. Gal, by Poggius; as appears by one of his letters dated 1417, written from Constance, where the council was then sitting. The monastery was about twenty miles from that city. Silius Italicus, and Valerius Flaccus, were found at the same time and place. A history of the manner in which the MSS. of ancient authors were found, would be an entertaining work to persons of literary curiosity. See Life of Lorenzo de' Medici. *Warton.*

Ver. 669. *In grave Quintilian's*] It is very justly remarked by Dr. Warton, that "to commend Quintilian barely for his *method*, is below his merit, as that elegant writer afforded copious matter for a more appropriated and poetical character." How differently does Leonardo Aretino speak, in his letter to Poggio, upon the discovery of Quintilian, with Silius Italicus and Valerius Flaccus, among dust and rubbish at the bottom of a tower, in the monastery of

Thus useful arms in magazines we place,
All rang'd in order, and dispos'd with grace,
But less to please the eye, than arm the hand,
Still fit for use, and ready at command.
Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
And bless their Critic with a Poet's fire.

NOTES.

of St. Gal! "I have the pleasure of informing you," he says, "that from this discovery of yours we have already derived more advantages than you are aware of; for by your exertions we are at length in possession of a perfect copy of Quintilian. I have inspected the title of the books; we have now the entire treatise, of which before we had only one half, and that in a very mutilated state. Oh, what a valuable acquisition! what an unexpected pleasure! Shall I then behold Quintilian whole and entire, who, even in his imperfect state, was so rich a source of delight. I entreat you, my dear Poggio, send me the manuscript as soon as possible, that I may see it before I die."

See Shepherd's Life of Poggio, page 105.

Nothing can shew more clearly the enthusiasm with which the buried treasures of classical authors were received, when they were brought to light, at this period; and Warton justly observes, that the history of the manner in which ancient MSS. were found, would be an entertaining work. *Bowles.*

Ver. 675. *Thee, bold Longinus!*] This abrupt address to Longinus is more spirited and striking, and more suitable to the character of the person addressed, than if he had coldly spoken of him in the third person, as it stood in the first edition. The taste and sensibility of Longinus were exquisite; but his observations are too general, and his method too loose. The precision of the true philosophical critic is lost in the declamation of the florid rhetorician. Instead of shewing for what reason a sentiment or image is sublime, and discovering the secret power by which they affect a reader with pleasure, he is ever intent on producing something sublime himself, and strokes of his own eloquence. Instead of pointing out the foundation of the grandeur of Homer's imagery, where he describes the motion of Neptune, the critic is endeavouring to rival the poet, by saying, that "there was not room enough

An ardent Judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just:
Whose own example strengthens all his laws;
And is himself that great Sublime he draws.
Thus long succeeding Critics justly reign'd,
Licence repress'd, and useful laws ordain'd.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 681. *Thus long succeeding Critics, &c.*] The *next period* in which the true Critic (he tells us) appeared, was at the revival and restoration of letters in the West. This occasions his giving a short history [from ver. 682 to 709.] of the decline and re-establishment of arts and sciences in *Italy*. He shews that they both fell under the same enemy, *despotic power;* and that when both had made some little efforts to recover themselves, they were soon again overwhelmed by a *second deluge* of another kind, namely, *Superstition;* and a calm of Dulness finished upon Rome and Letters what the rage of Barbarism had begun:

" A *second deluge* Learning thus o'er-run,
And the *Monk* finish'd what the *Goth* begun."

When things had long remained in this condition, and all hopes of recovery now seemed desperate, it was a CRITIC, our Author shews us, for the honour of the *Art* he here teaches, who at length broke the charm of Dulness, who dissipated the inchantment, and, like another Hercules, drove those cowl'd and *hooded serpents* from the Hesperian tree of knowledge, which they had so long guarded from human approach.

NOTES.

enough in the whole earth to take such another step." He should have shewn why the speech of Phäeton to his son, in a fragment of Euripides, was so lively and picturesque; instead of which, he ardently exclaims, " would not you say, that the soul of the writer ascended the chariot with the driver, and was whirled along in the same flight and danger with the rapid horses?" I have frequently wondered, that Longinus, who mentions Tully, should have taken no notice of Virgil or Horace. I suppose he thought them only servile copiers of the Greeks. Neither Herodotus nor Thucydides ever once mention the Romans. *Warton.*

Ver. 680. *And is himself that great Sublime he draws.*] It is remarked

Learning and Rome alike in empire grew;
And arts still follow'd where her eagles flew;
From the same Foes, at last, both felt their doom,
And the same age saw Learning fall and Rome.
With Tyranny, then Superstition join'd,
As that the body, this enslav'd the mind;
Much was believ'd, but little understood,
And to be dull was constru'd to be good;
A second deluge Learning thus o'er-run,
And the Monks finish'd what the Goths begun.

NOTES.

remarked in Smith's Translation, that the Prince of Condé, when he heard a fine passage repeated from the seventh section of Longinus's Treatise on the Sublime, exclaimed, "Voila le sublime! voila son veritable caractère!" *Bowles.*

Ver. 686. *saw learning fall*] Literature and the arts which flourished to so great a degree about the time of Augustus, gradually felt a decline, from many concurrent causes; from the vast extent of the Roman empire, and its consequent despotism, which crushed every noble effort of the mind; from the military government, which rendered life and property precarious, and therefore destroyed even the necessary arts of agriculture and manufactures; and by the irruption of the barbarous nations, which was occasioned and facilitated by this state of things. About the eleventh century the people of Christendom were sunk in the lowest ignorance and brutality, till the accidental finding Justinian's Pandects at Amalfi in Italy, about the year 1130, began to awaken and enlarge the minds of men, by laying before them an art that would give stability and security to all the other arts that support and embellish life. It is a mistake to think that the arts were destroyed by the irruptions of the northern nations. They had degenerated and decayed before that event. *Warton.*

Ver. 691. *A second deluge, &c.*] In referring to the revival of learning,

VARIATIONS.

Between ver. 690 and 691, the author omitted these two:

Vain Wits and Critics were no more allow'd,
When none but Saints had licence to be proud. *P.*

At length Erasmus, that great injur'd name,
(The glory of the priesthood and the shame!)

NOTES.

learning, it ought not to escape our notice, that a great effort was made for its restoration by Charlemagne, who not only collected about him learned men from all parts, but submitted to become their disciple and pupil. His earliest instructor was Petrus Diaconus, but it is to the honour of our own country, that the person who initiated him into the higher departments of learning was an Englishman—the celebrated Alcuin, the disciple of Bede. The exertions of Alcuin in the cause of learning are commemorated by all its historians, and are evinced by several of his works which yet remain. By his directions and example, and under the imperial patronage, schools and universities began to be established; and those of Pisa, Padua, Cremona, Florence, Verona, and many other places, are referred to this early period. With the death of Charlemagne the cause of literature again declined, and it was not till nearly two centuries afterwards that the effort began to be made which has eventually proved successful. After this slow and gradual revival, which is not merely to be attributed to the discovery of the pandects of Justinian, but to various concurring causes, learning was over-run by no second deluge. Its progress from that period to the beginning of the sixteenth century, may be traced in an almost unbroken series, through Pier Lombardo, Lanfranc Archbishop of Canterbury, Peter Abelard, Guido d' Arezzo, Guglielmo della Puglia, Arnoldo da Brescia, Borgondio Pisano, Ischamus, Gualtherus, both Latin poets, Folco, or Folchetto, Raymond Count of Toulouse, Johannes Accursius, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Planudes, Leontius Pilatus, Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Gower, Wickliffe, Gregorius Tiphernas, Ambrogio Traversari, Lionardo Bruni (d'Arezzo) Gemisthus Pletho, Thomas a Kempis, Filelfo, Poggio Bracciolini, Chrysoloras, Arguropylus, Theodore Gaza, Bessarion, Joh. Lascar, Nicholas V. Aeneas Sylvius (Pius II.) Marsilio Ficino, Angelo Politiano, Marcus Musurus, Gio. Pico of Mirandula, Matteo Bosso, Pontano, Sanazzaro, &c. By some of these eminent men almost all the works of the ancient authors were discovered, restored, and commented on, and many of them published before the end of the fifteenth century. It is true the cultivation of the modern languages, which had made some progress as well in France

Stemm'd the wild torrent of a barb'rous age, 695
And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.

NOTES.

France and England, as in Italy, in the early part of the fourteenth century, was interrupted and declined, but this is perhaps to be attributed to the superior attention paid to classical literature, which continued in an uninterrupted progress till its final establishment in the sixteenth century. This passage in the Essay on Criticism gave rise to a short and friendly controversy between the author and a certain Abbé, which is referred to in the Life of Pope, and in which the critic appears to have had the advantage.

Ver. 693. *At length Erasmus, &c.*] Nothing can be more artful than the application of this example: or more happy than the turn of the compliment. To throw glory quite round the character of this admirable person, he makes it to be (as in fact it really was) by his assistance chiefly, that Leo was enabled to restore letters and the fine arts in his Pontificate. *Warburton.*

This is not exactly true; others had a share in this great and important work. *Warton.*

If the restoration of learning consisted in recovering the works and reviving the spirit of the ancients, it had been in a great degree accomplished before the time of Erasmus.—This however cannot detract from the superlative merits of that eminent scholar, who may be considered in literature as the apostle of the Gentiles, who by his writings and his exertions diffused a spirit of sound learning through every part of Europe. Erasmus was good-sense personified, and his merits appear no less in restraining and opposing a too implicit subservience to the ancients, than in recommending and restoring their works. In this respect he resembled his predecessor Politian, who did not attempt to write precisely as the ancients wrote, but as they would have written had they lived in his own times.

Ver. 694. *(The glory of the Priesthood and the shame!)*] Our author elsewhere lets us know what he esteems to be the glory of the Priesthood as well as of a Christian in general, where, comparing himself to Erasmus, he says,

"In Moderation placing all my glory."

and consequently what he regards as the shame of it. The whole of this character belonged eminently and almost solely to Erasmus:

But see! each Muse, in LEO's golden days,
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays,

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 697. *But see each Muse in* LEO's *golden days,*] This presents us with the *second period* in which the *true Critic* appeared; of whom he has given us a complete idea in the single example of Marcus Hieronymus Vida: For his subject being poetical Criticism, for the use principally of a critical Poet, his example is an eminent poetical Critic, who had written of the Art of Poetry in verse.

NOTES.

mus: For the other Reformers, such as Luther, Calvin, and their followers, understood so little in what true christian liberty consisted, that they carried with them, into the reformed churches, that very spirit of persecution, which had driven them from the church of Rome. *Warburton.*

Ver. 696. *And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.*] In this attack on the established ignorance of the times, Erasmus succeeded so well, as to bring good letters into fashion: to which he gave new splendour, by preparing for the press correct editions of many of the best ancient writers, both ecclesiastical and prophane. But having laughed and shamed his age out of one folly, he had the mortification of seeing it run headlong into another. The Virtuosi of Italy, in a superstitious dread of that monkish barbarity which he had so severely handled, would use no term, (for now almost every man was become a Latin writer,) not even when they treated of the highest mysteries of religion, which had not been consecrated in the Capitol, and dispensed unto them from the sacred hand of Cicero. Erasmus observed the growth of this classical folly with the greater concern, as he discovered under all their attention to the language of old Rome, a certain fondness for its religion, in a growing impiety which disposed them to think irreverently of the Christian Faith. And he no sooner discovered it than he set upon reforming it; which he did so effectually in the Dialogue, entitled Ciceronianus, that he brought the age back to that just temper, which he had been, all his life, endeavouring to mark out to it: Purity, but not pedantry, in Letters; and zeal, but not bigotry, in Religion. In a word, by employing his great talents of genius and literature on subjects of general importance;

Rome's ancient Genius, o'er its ruins spread,
Shakes off the dust, and rears his rev'rend head. 700

NOTES.

portance; and by opposing the extremes of all parties in their turns; he completed the real character of a true Critic and an honest Man. *Warburton.*

Ver. 697. *But see! each Muse in* LEO's *golden days,*] History has recorded five ages of the world, in which the human mind has exerted itself in an extraordinary manner; and in which its productions in literature and the fine arts have arrived at a perfection, not equalled in other periods.

The First is the age of Philip and Alexander; about which time flourished Socrates, Plato, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Lysippus, Apelles, Phidias, Praxiteles, Thucydides, Xenophon, Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Menander, Philemon. The Second age, which seems not to have been taken sufficient notice of, was that of Ptolomy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, in which appeared Lycophron, Aratus, Nicander, Apollonius Rhodius, Theocritus, Callimachus, Eratosthenes, Philichus, Erasistratus the physician, Timæus the historian, Cleanthes, Diogenes the painter, and Sostrates the architect. This prince, from his love of learning, commanded the Old Testament to be translated into Greek. The Third age is that of Julius Cæsar, and Augustus; marked with the illustrious names of Laberius, Catullus, Lucretius, Cicero, Livy, Varro, Virgil, Horace, Propertius, Tibullus, Ovid, Phædrus, Vitruvius, Dioscorides. The Fourth age was that of Julius II, and Leo X, which produced Ariosto, Tasso, Fracastorius, Sannazarius, Vida, Bembo, Sadolet, Machiavel, Guiccardin, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian. The Fifth age is that of Louis XIV., in France, and of King William and Queen Anne, in England; in which, or thereabouts, are to be found, Corneille, Moliere, Racine, Boileau, La Fontaine, Bossuet, La Rochefoucault, Paschal, Bourdaloue, Patru, Malbranche, De Retz, La Bruyere, St. Real, Fenelon, Lully, Le Sœur, Poussin, Le Brun, Puget, Theodon, Gerradon, Edelinck, Nanteuill, Perrault the architect, Dryden, Tillotson, Temple, Pope, Addison, Garth, Congreve, Rowe, Prior, Lee, Swift, Bolingbroke, Atterbury, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Clarke, Kneller, Thornhill, Jervas, Purcell, Mead, Friend.

Leo

Then Sculpture and her sister-arts revive;
Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live;
With sweeter notes each rising Temple rung;
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.

NOTES.

Leo the Tenth little imagined, that by promoting the revival of ancient literature, and by the discovery and diffusion of that manly and liberal knowledge which it contained, and which opened and enlarged the bigoted minds of men, into boldness of thought, and freedom of inquiry on all important subjects, he was gradually undermining the absurdity and the tyranny of the Romish church, and emancipating its wretched devotees from ignorance and superstition. In vain, under such circumstances, was the Complutensian edition of the Bible given. Cardinal Pole, it is said, with great shrewdness, warned Leo of the consequences of thus enlightening Europe.

In Bayle may be seen the pains he took, and the expenses he incurred, by purchasing curious manuscripts from every country where they could be found; and his liberalities to men of genius need not be enlarged upon. One cannot but lament that the charming Ariosto, who was once so favoured and caressed by him, was afterwards neglected and forgotten by this Pope, and denied a preferment which he had promised him, which occasioned the severity with which he treated Leo in his Fifth Satire. It is remarkable, that in the bull which this Pope gave to Ariosto, on the printing his Orlando, he speaks of it as a kind of burlesque poem; as describing, Equitum errantium Itinera, ludicro more, longo tamen studio, &c. *Warton.*

Ver. 699. *o'er its ruins spread,*] In the ninth century, it was said, there were more statues than inhabitants at Rome. *Warton.*

Ver. 703. *With sweeter notes*] I have the best authority, that of the learned, accurate, and ingenious Dr. Burney, for observing, that, in the age of Leo the Tenth, music did not keep pace with poetry in advancing towards perfection. Costantio Festa was the best Italian composer during the time of Leo, and Pietro Aaron the best theorist. Palestrina was not born till eight years after the death of Leo. See History of Music, Vol. II. p. 336. *Warton.*

The

Immortal Vida: on whose honour'd brow 705
The poet's bays and critics ivy grow:

NOTES.

The line of Pope referred to by Warton is as just and correct as it is beautiful. Leo was not only an admirer of music, but a skilful performer; and we are informed by Pietro Aaron, that "though he had acquired a consummate knowledge in most arts and sciences, he seemed to love, encourage, and exalt music more than any other."—To sacred music he paid a more particular attention; and sought throughout Europe for the most celebrated performers, both vocal and instrumental, whom he rewarded with the utmost liberality; of which instances are given in "*The Life and Pontificate of Leo X.*" vol. iv. p. 489. 8vo. ed.

Ver. 705. *Immortal Vida:*] But Vida was by no means the most celebrated poet that adorned the age of Leo the Tenth; and music received not so many improvements, as the other fine arts, at that period. When Vida was advanced to a bishopric, he went to pay a visit to his aged parents, who were in very low circumstances; but unhappily found they were just deceased. An action more meritorious than writing his Poetics.

The merits of Vida seem not to have been particularly attended to in England, till Pope had bestowed this commendation upon him; although the Poetics had been correctly published at Oxford, by Basil Kennet, some time before. The Silk-worms of Vida are written with classical purity, and with a just mixture of the styles of Lucretius and Virgil. It was a happy choice to write a poem on Chess; nor is the execution less happy. The various stratagems and manifold intricacies of this ingenious game, so difficult to be described in Latin, are here expressed with the greatest perspicuity and elegance; so that perhaps the game might be learned from this description. Amidst many prosaic flatnesses there are many fine strokes in the Christiad; particularly his angels, with respect to their persons and insignia, are drawn with that dignity which we so much admire in Milton; who seems to have had his eye on those passages.

Gravina (Della Ragion. Poet. p. 127.) applauds Vida, for having found out a method to introduce the whole history of our Saviour's life, by putting it into the mouth of St. Joseph and St. John, who relate it to Pilate. But surely this speech, consisting of as many lines as that of Dido to Æneas, was too long to be made

Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!

NOTES.

made on such an occasion, when Christ was brought before the tribunal of Pilate, to be judged and condemned to death. The Poetics are, perhaps, the most perfect of his compositions; they are excellently translated by Pitt. Vida had formed himself upon Virgil, who is therefore his hero; he has too much depreciated Homer, and also Dante. Although his precepts principally regard epic poetry, yet many of them are applicable to every species of composition. This poem has the praise of being one of the * first, if not the very first, pieces of criticism, that appeared in Italy since the revival of learning: for it was finished, as is evident from a short advertisement prefixed to it, in the year 1520. It is remarkable, that most of the great poets, about this time, wrote an Art of Poetry. Trissino, a name respected for giving to Europe the first regular epic poem, and for first daring to throw off the bondage of rhyme, published at Vicenza, in the year 1529, Della Poetica, divisioni quattro, several years before his Italia Liberata. We have of Fracastorius, Naugerius, sive de arte poetica dialogus, Venetiis, 1555. Minturnus, De Poeta, libri sex, appeared at Venice 1559. Bernardo Tasso, the father of Torquato, and author of an epic poem, entitled, L'Amadigi, wrote Raggionamento della Poesia, printed at Venice, 1562. And to pay the highest honour to criticism, the great Torquato Tasso himself wrote Discorsi del poema Eroico, printed at Venice, 1587. These discourses are full of learning and taste. But I must not omit a curious anecdote, which Menage has given us in his Anti-Baillet; namely, that Sperone claimed these discourses as his own; for he thus speaks of them, in one of his Letters to Felice Paciotto:

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 708. *As next in place to Mantua,*] Alluding to
"Mantua væ miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ." Virg.
This application is made in Kennet's edition of Vida. *Warton.*

* Victorius's Latin translation of Aristotle's Poetics was published at Florence, 1560. Castelvetro's Italian one at Vienna, 1570.

But soon by impious arms from Latium chas'd,
Their ancient bounds the banish'd Muses pass'd.

COMMENTARY.

Ver. 709. *But soon by impious arms, &c.*] This brings us to the *third period*, after learning had travelled still farther West; when the arms of the Emperor, in the sack of Rome by the duke of

NOTES.

Paciotto; "Laudo voi infinitamente di voler scrivere della poetica; della quale interrogato molto fiate dal Tasso, e rispondendogli io liberamente, si come soglio, egli n'a fatto un volume, e mandato al Signor Scipio Gonzago per cosa sua, e non mia; ma io ne chiarirò il mondo."

Hence it appears, that our author was mistaken in saying, line 712, that "Critic-learning flourished most in France." For these critical works here mentioned, by so many capital writers in Italy, far exceed any which the French, at that period of time, had produced. "'Tis hard (said Akenside) to conceive by what means the French acquired this character of superior correctness. We have classic authors in English, older than in any modern language, except the Italian; and Spenser and Sidney wrote with the truest taste, when the French had not one great poet they can bear to read. Milton and Chapelain were contemporaries; the Pucelle and Paradise Lost were in hand, perhaps frequently, at the selfsame hour. One of them was executed in such a manner, that an Athenian of Menander's age would have turned his eyes from the Minerva of Phidias, or the Venus of Apelles, to obtain more perfect conceptions of beauty from the English Poet; the other, though fostered by the French court for twenty years with the utmost indulgence, does honour to the Leonine, and the Runic poetry. It was too great an attention to French criticism, that hindered our poets, in Charles the Second's time, from comprehending the genius, and acknowledging the authority of Milton; else, without looking abroad, they might have acquired a manner more correct and perfect, than French authors could or can teach them. In short, unless correctness signify a freedom from little faults, without inquiring after the most essential beauties, it scarce appears on what foundation the French claim to that character is established." *Warton.*

Thence Arts o'er all the northern world advance,
But Critic-learning flourish'd most in France;
The rules a nation born to serve, obeys;
And Boileau still in right of Horace sways.
But we, brave Britons, foreign laws despis'd,
And kept unconquer'd, and unciviliz'd;

COMMENTARY.

of Bourbon, had driven it out of Italy, and forced it to pass the *Mountains*.—The examples he gives in this period, are of Boileau in France, and of the Lord Roscommon and the Duke of Buckingham in England: And these were all Poets, as well as Critics in verse. It is true, the last instance is of one who was no eminent poet, the late Mr. Walsh. This small deviation might be well overlooked, were it only for its being a pious office to the memory of his friend. But it may be further justified, as it was an homage paid in particular to the MORALS of the Critic, nothing being more amiable than the character here drawn of this excellent person. He being our Author's Judge and Censor, as well as Friend, it gives him a graceful opportunity to add himself to the number of the later Critics; and with a character of his own genius and temper, sustained by that modesty and dignity which it is so difficult to make consistent, this performance concludes.

I have here given a short and plain account of the ESSAY ON CRITICISM; concerning which, I have but one thing more to say: That when the Reader considers the Regularity of the plan, the masterly Conduct of each part, the penetration into Nature, and the compass of Learning throughout, he should at the same time know, it was the work of an Author who had not attained the twentieth year of his age.

NOTES.

Ver. 714. *And Boileau still in right of Horace sways.*] May I be pardoned for declaring it as my opinion, that Boileau's is the best Art of Poetry* extant. The brevity of his precepts, enlivened by proper imagery, the justness of his metaphors, the harmony of his numbers, as far as Alexandrine lines will admit, the exactness of

* It was translated into Portuguese verse by Count d'Ericeyra.

Fierce for the liberties of wit, and bold,
We still defy'd the Romans, as of old.
Yet some there were, among the sounder few
Of those who less presum'd, and better knew,
Who durst assert the juster ancient cause,
And here restor'd Wit's fundamental laws.
Such was the Muse, whose rules and practice tell
" Nature's chief Master-piece is writing well."

NOTES.

of his method, the perspicacity of his remarks, and the energy of his style, all duly considered, may render this opinion not unreasonable. It is scarcely to be conceived, how much is comprehended in four short cantos. He that has well digested these, cannot be said to be ignorant of any important rule of poetry. The tale of the Physician turning Architect, in the fourth canto, is told with true pleasantry. It is to this work Boileau owes his immortality; which was of the highest utility to this nation, in diffusing a just way of thinking and writing; banishing every species of false wit, and introducing a general taste for the manly simplicity of the ancients, on whose writings this poet had formed his taste. *Warton.*

Ver. 723. *Such was the Muse,*] *Essay on Poetry* by the Duke of Buckingham. Our Poet is not the only one of his time who complimented this *Essay*, and its noble Author. Mr. Dryden had done it very largely in the Dedication to his translation of the Æneid; and Dr. Garth in the first edition of his Dispensary says,

" The Tyber now no courtly Gallus sees,
But smiling Thames enjoys his Normanbys;"

though afterwards omitted, when parties were carried so high in the reign of Queen Anne, as to allow no commendation to an opposite in politics. The Duke was all his life a steady adherent to the Church of England Party, yet an enemy to the extravagant Measures of the Court in the reign of Charles II. On which account, after having strongly patronized Mr. Dryden, a coolness succeeded between them on that Poet's absolute attachment to the Court, which carried him some length beyond what the Duke could approve of. This nobleman's true character had been very well marked by Mr. Dryden before:

" The

Such was Roscommon, not more learn'd than good,
With manners gen'rous as his noble blood;
To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
And ev'ry author's merit, but his own.

NOTES.

" The Muse's friend,
Himself a Muse. In Sanadrin's debate
True to his prince, but not a slave of state."
Abs. and Achit.

Our Author was more happy; he was honoured very young with his friendship, and it continued till his death in all the circumstances of a familiar esteem. *P.*

Ver. 723. *Such was the Muse, whose rules and practice tell,*
" Nature's chief Master-piece is writing well."]

This high panegyric, which was not in the first edition, procured to Pope the acquaintance, and afterwards the constant friendship, of the Duke of Buckingham; who, in his essay here alluded to, has followed the method of Boileau, in discoursing on the various species of poetry in their different gradations, to no other purpose than to manifest his own inferiority. *Warton.*

Ver. 725. *Such was Roscommon,*] An Essay on Translated Verse seems, at first sight, to be a barren subject; yet Roscommon has decorated it with many precepts of utility and taste, and enlivened it with a tale in imitation of Boileau. It is indisputably better written, in a closer and more vigorous style, than the last-mentioned essay. Roscommon was more learned than Buckingham. He was bred under Bochart, at Caen in Normandy. He had laid a design of forming a society for the refining, and fixing the standard of our language; in which project, his intimate friend Dryden was a principal assistant.

It may be remarked, to the praise of Roscommon, that he was the first critic who had taste and spirit publicly to praise the Paradise Lost; with a noble encomium of which, and a rational recommendation of blank verse, he concludes his performance, though this passage was not in the first edition. Fenton, in his Observations on Waller, has accurately delineated his character. " His imagination might have, probably, been more fruitful, and sprightly, if his judgment had been less severe; but that severity, delivered in a masculine, clear, succinct style, contributed to make

Such late was Walsh—the Muse's judge and frien.
Who justly knew to blame or to commend;
To failings mild, but zealous for desert;
The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.
This humble praise, Lamented Shade! receive,
This praise at least a grateful Muse may give:
The Muse, whose early voice you taught to sing,
Prescrib'd her heights, and prun'd her tender wing,

NOTES.

him so eminent in the didactical manner, that no man, with justice, can affirm, he was ever equalled by any of our own nation, without confessing, at the same time, that he is inferior to none. In some other kinds of writing, his genius seems to have wanted fire to attain the point of perfection; but who can attain it?"—Edit. 12mo. p. 136. *Warton.*

Ver. 729.] Several lines were here added to the first edition, concerning Walsh. *Warton.*

Ver. 729. *Such late was Walsh—the Muse's judge and friend,*] If Pope has here given too magnificent an eulogy to Walsh, it must be attributed to friendship, rather than to judgment. Walsh was, in general, a flimsy and frigid writer. The Rambler calls his works, pages of inanity. His three letters to Pope, however, are well written. His remarks on the nature of pastoral poetry, on borrowing from the ancients, and against florid conceits, are worthy perusal. Pope owed much to Walsh; it was he who gave him a very important piece of advice, in his early youth; for he used to tell our author, that there was one way still left open for him, by which he might excel any of his predecessors, which was, by correctness: that though, indeed, we had several great poets, we as yet could boast of none that were perfectly correct; and that therefore he advised him to make this quality his particular study.

Correctness is a vague term, frequently used without meaning and precision. It is perpetually the nauseous cant of the French critics, and of their advocates and pupils, that the English writers are generally incorrect. If correctness implies an absence of petty faults, this perhaps may be granted. If it means, that, because their tragedians have avoided the irregularities of Shakespear,

(Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,
But in low numbers short excursions tries;
Content, if hence th' unlearn'd their wants may view,
The learn'd reflect on what before they knew: 740
Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame;
Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame;

NOTES.

spear, and have observed a juster œconomy in their fables, therefore the Athalia, for instance, is preferable to Lear, the notion is groundless and absurd. Though the Henriade should be allowed to be free from any very gross absurdities, yet who will dare to rank it with the Paradise Lost? Some of their most perfect tragedies abound in faults as contrary to the nature of that species of poetry, and as destructive to its end, as the fools or grave-diggers of Shakespear. That the French may boast some excellent critics, particularly Bossu, Boileau, Fenelon, and Brumoy, cannot be denied; but that these are sufficient to form a taste upon, without having recourse to the genuine fountains of all polite literature, I mean the Grecian writers, no one but a superficial reader can allow.

Warton.

Ver. 741. *Careless of censure,*] These concluding lines bear a great resemblance to Boileau's conclusion of his Art of Poetry, but are perhaps superior.

" Censeur un peu facheux, mais souvent necessaire;
Plus enclin à blâmer, que sçavant à bien faire."

Our author has not, in this piece, followed the examples of the ancients, in addressing their didactic poems to some particular person; as Hesiod to Perses; Lucretius to Memmius; Virgil to Mæcenas; Horace to the Pisos; Ovid, his Fasti, to Germanicus; Oppian to Caracalla. In later times, Fracastorius addressed P. Bembo; Vida, the Dauphin of France. But neither Boileau in his Art, nor Roscommon nor Buckingham in their Essays,* nor Akenside nor Armstrong, have followed this practice. *Warton.*

* Akenside's last copy of the Pleasures of Imagination, is addressed to his friend Dyson, and he mentions the circumstance of their early friendship, in a most interesting manner, and with uncommon sweetness of verse. *Bowles.*

Averse alike to flatter, or offend;
Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.

THE precepts of the art of poesy were posterior to practice; the rules of the Epopea were all drawn from the Iliad and the Odyssey; and of Tragedy, from the Œdipus of Sophocles. A petulant rejection, and an implicit veneration, of the rules of the ancient critics, are equally destructive of true taste. "It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer (says the Rambler, No. 156,) to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is established because it is right, from that which is right, only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of any beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules, which no literary dictator had authority to prescribe."

This liberal and manly censure of critical bigotry, extends not to those fundamental and indispensable rules, which nature and necessity dictate, and demand to be observed; such for instance, as in the higher kinds of poetry, that the action of the Epopea, be one, great, and entire; that the hero be eminently distinguished, move our concern, and deeply interest us; that the episodes arise easily out of the main fable; that the action commence as near the catastrophe as possible; and in the drama, that no more events be crowded together, than can be justly supposed to happen during the time of representation, or to be transacted on one individual spot, and the like. But the absurdity here animadverted on, is the scrupulous nicety of those who bind themselves to obey frivolous and unimportant laws; such as, that an epic poem should consist not of less than twelve books; that it should end fortunately; that in the first book there should be no simile; that the exordium should be very simple and unadorned; that in a tragedy, only three personages should appear at once upon the stage; and that every tragedy should consist of five acts; by the rigid observation of which last unnecessary precept, the poet is deprived of using many a moving story, that would furnish matter enough for three perhaps, but not for five acts; with other rules of the like indifferent nature. For the rest, as Voltaire observes, whether the action of an Epopea be simple or complex, completed in a month, or a year, or a longer time, whether the scene be fixed on one

spot, as in the Iliad; or that the hero voyages from sea to sea, as in the Odyssey; whether he be furious like Achilles, or pious like Eneas; whether the action pass on land or sea; on the coast of Africa, as in the Luziada of Camoens; in America, as in the Araucana of Alonzo d' Ercilla; in heaven, in hell, beyond the limits of our world, as in the Paradise Lost; all these circumstances are of no consequence, the poem will be for ever an epic poem, an heroic poem; at least till another new title be found proportioned to its merit. "If you scruple (says Addison) to give the title of an Epic Poem to the Paradise Lost of Milton, call it, if you choose, a Divine Poem; give it whatever name you please, provided you confess, that it is a work as admirable in its kind as the Iliad."

It has become a fashionable attempt of late, to censure and decry an obedience to the rules laid down by ancient Critics; while one party, loudly and frequently exclaim,

——— Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ;

Another, instantly answers,

——— O imitatores servum pecus!

One of the ablest defenders of literary liberty expresses himself thus:

"From the time of Homer, epic poetry became an artificial composition, whose rules were, in reality, drawn from the practice of the Grecian Bard, rather than from the principles of nature. Lyric and dramatic poetry were in like manner fixed, though at a later period, by Grecian models; so that the Roman writers of similar performances could not be said to bring any thing of their own to their works. The same shackles of imitation have hung upon the poetry of modern Europe; whence a fair comparison of the powers and genius of different periods is rendered scarcely practicable. The leading species of poetry, like the orders of architecture, have come down to us subject to certain proportions, and requiring certain ornamental accompaniments, which perhaps, have had no foundation whatever, but the casual practice of the earliest masters; nay, possibly, the whole existence of some of the species has had the same accidental origin.

"Meantime the veneration for the ancients has been raised to the highest pitch by this perpetual reference to them as models; and it has been concluded, that works which have engaged the study, and called forth the imitation of so many succeeding ages,

must possess a superior degree of excellence. But after all, their reputation may have been much more owing to accident than is commonly supposed. That the Grecian poets, continually recording the deeds of their countrymen, and offering incense to the national vanity, should have been held in high esteem at home, was natural. That the Romans, receiving all their literature from Greece, should adopt its principles and prejudices, was also to be expected. But that they should transmit them to so large a portion of the civilized world, and this, not only during the period of their domination, but to new races of men, so many centuries after the downfall of their empire, must be reckoned accident, as far as any thing in human affairs can be called accidental. Had not the Christian religion established a kind of second Roman empire, even more capable of swaying the opinions of mankind than the first, it is highly improbable that we should at this day have been commenting upon the classical writers of Greece and Rome. It is indeed astonishing to reflect, by what a strange concatenation of cause and effect, the youth of Christian Europe should be instructed in the fables of Greek and Latin mythology, which were fallen into contempt even before Rome ceased to be heathen.

"It certainly has not been on account of their wisdom and beauty that they have survived the wreck of so many better things. They have been embalmed in the languages which contained them, and which, by becoming likewise the depositaries of Christian doctrine, have been rendered sacred languages."

To this sort of reasoning, the imitators of the Ancients, by way of answer, must say, that all they mean in adhering to rules, is to adopt, "that method of treating any subject, that may render it most interesting to a reader." This, for instance, was the reason why Aristotle gives the preference to those Tragedies, where there is a discovery and peripetic. And hence, they will say, the Œdipus of Sophocles is as perfect a model of dramatic, as the Medicean Venus is of female beauty. The learned and ingenious translator of Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry, is of a different opinion. "When we speak (says he) of the Greek tragedies, as perfect and correct models, we seem merely to conform to the established language of prejudice, and content ourselves with echoing without reflection or examination, what has been said before us. I should be sorry to be ranked in the class of those critics, who prefer that poetry which has the fewest faults, to that which has the greatest beauties. I

mean only to combat that conventional and hearsay kind of praise, which has so often held out the tragedies of the Greek poets, as elaborate and perfect models, such as had received the last polish of art and meditation. The true praise of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, is (in kind at least, if not in degree,) the praise of Shakespear; that of strong, but irregular, unequal, and hasty genius. Every thing which this genius, and the feeling of the moment would produce, in an early period of the art, before time and long experience, and criticism, had cultivated and refined it, these writers possess in great abundance; what meditation, and the labour and delay of the file only can effect, they too often want; of Shakespear however, compared with the Greek Poets, it may justly I think be pronounced, that he has much more both of this want, and of that abundance."—Twining's Aristotle, p. 207.

In no polished nation, after criticism has been much studied, and the rules of writing established, has any very extraordinary work appeared. This has visibly been the case in Greece, in Rome, and in France; after Aristotle, Horace, and Boileau, had written their Arts of Poetry. In our own country the rules of the drama, for instance, were never more completely understood than at present; yet what uninteresting, though faultless, tragedies have we lately seen? So much better is our judgment than our execution. How to account for the fact here mentioned, adequately and justly, would be attended with all those difficulties that await discussions relative to the productions of the human mind; and to the delicate and secret causes that influence them. Whether or no, the natural powers be not confined and debilitated by that timidity and caution which is occasioned by a rigid regard to the dictates of art? or whether that philosophical, that geometrical, and systematical spirit so much in vogue, which has spread itself from the sciences even into polite literature, by consulting only reason, has not diminished and destroyed sentiment; and made our poets write from and to the head, rather than the heart? or whether, lastly, when just models, from which the rules have necessarily been drawn, have once appeared, succeeding writers, by vainly and ambitiously striving to surpass those just models, and to shine and surprise, do not become stiff, and forced and affected, in their thoughts and diction?

It is not improper to observe what great improvements the Art

of Criticism has received since this Essay was written. For without recurring to pieces of earlier date, and nearer the time in which it was written; namely, the Essays in the Spectator and Guardian; Shaftesbury's Advice to an Author; Spence on the Odyssey; Fenton on Waller; Blackwell's Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer: even of late years, we have had the Treatises of Harris; Hurd's Remarks on Horace; Observations on the Fairy Queen; Webb on Poetry and Music; Brown's Dissertation on the same; the Dissertations of Beattie; the Elements of Criticism of Kaims; the Lectures of Blair; the editions of Milton, by Newton and Warton; and of Shakespear and Spenser, by Malone, Stevens, and Upton; the History of English Poetry; the critical papers of the Rambler, Adventurer, World, and Connoisseur; and The Lives of the Poets, by Johnson; the Biographia Britannica; and the Poetics of Aristotle, translated, and accompanied with judicious notes, by Twining and Pye; and the translation, with notes, of Horace's Art of Poetry, by Hurd and Colman; and the Epistles of Hayley. *Warton.*

Dr. Warton's observation that few poetical pieces of high merit have appeared, after criticism has been studied, and the rules of writing established, is undoubtedly just; but there is nothing very extraordinary in the circumstance. As the wildest countries are by nature more *picturesque*, the rude banks, the aged forests, and *unsubdued* scenery of the Mississippi, more romantic than the course of the *Thames* through its domain of elegant cultivation; so in Poetry, those ages that are comparatively rude and simple, in which the language is figurative, the traditions wild, the cast of manners original, or tinctured with ideas of superstition, chivalry, and romance, are most favourable to works of fancy. When we consider the works of genius which imply great art and design in the structure, such as Epic Poems and Tragedies, we shall find in general that the time most favourable to their production, is when civilization has advanced beyond the limits of simplicity and rudeness, but still is marked with energy, originality, and native vigour. This period is peculiarly friendly to works of high yet cultivated imagination. Criticism implies an age of reason and refinement, when Imagination is subdued to Truth. This is as it should be, for Poetry is *certainly* secondary to Truth, and we cannot have from the same tree, at the same time, blossoms and

fruits. It often however happens, that an age becomes *too refined* either for *Poetry* or *Truth*, and we know *extravagant Philosophy* is much more dangerous than romantic Poetry; it is for this reason that the mind often flies from vain and visionary systems of licentious philosophy, to repose upon the ideas of virtue, the dignified consolations, the enchanting pictures, or the pathetic incidents which the Muse presents. *Bowles.*

From the foregoing opinions of the preceding editors, I must be allowed to express my intire dissent. I can neither admit that an acquaintance with the laws of criticism is injurious to the efforts of genius, nor that few poetical pieces of high merit have appeared since such laws were established. Are the powers of the human mind debilitated, or restrained, by an attention to such rules as are insisted on in the foregoing Essay, which chiefly consist in recommending an adherence to nature, simplicity, and truth? or were the works which Pope himself produced, after he had so deeply studied the laws of poetical composition, less distinguished by genius and imagination than those of his earlier years? Yet if the observations of these critics were just, this Essay, instead of advancing, would retard the progress of the art; instead of directing the flight of genius, would only be a clog attached to his heel.

More than two thousand years have elapsed since "criticism has been studied," and the laws of poetic composition laid down almost as explicitly as at the present day. Have "few poetical pieces of high merit" appeared in this interval? or have not our greatest works been produced by those who were the best acquainted with those rules? Were not Virgil, and Horace, and Tasso, and Boileau, and Milton, and Dryden, and Pope, eminently distinguished by their intimate knowledge of the rules of art, as laid down by the ancients? And will it be contended that such knowledge has restricted their powers and deteriorated their works? Are the former editors of Pope really of opinion that their own unremitting labours, in inculcating from his writings the laws of just composition, are not only useless, but injurious? and that the more that is known of an art, the less likely it is to arrive at excellence?

Nor does there seem to be any justice or propriety in the idea that poetry is peculiar to a wild and *picturesque* country, or to rude and simple ages. On the contrary, all the works which have sur-

vived the attacks of time, have been the result of the highest state of cultivation of the countries in which they were produced. Whatever was the age of Homer, it must be admitted that his contemporaries had arrived at such a degree of civilization, as to enable them to feel and to enjoy his productions, and consequently cannot be considered as a rude or unpolished people. The period of Sophocles and Euripides in Greece, of Cicero and Virgil in Rome; of Ariosto, Bembo, and Tasso in Italy; of Racine, Boileau, and Moliere in France; of Milton, Dryden, and Pope in England; have been the highest periods of refinement in those countries, during which almost all the works that command universal admiration have been produced.

In speaking of the progress of mankind in civilization, we are too apt to fall into the idea that they form one immense society, which has its different stages of youth, vigour, and decline; but the ideas of youth and age are relative only to individuals, and seem to have no connexion whatever with the world at large, in which many nations and people are now in as rude and simple a state as others, now more refined and polished, were some thousands of years ago. It is not however from those countries that we are to expect in any predicable time, the inestimable productions of literature or of art. How many ages of civilization had preceded each of those periods of extraordinary excellence to which we have before referred! To establish the rules and principles of any art or science, is so far to prevent the retrogradation and secure the progress of the human race; and notwithstanding the long catalogue given by Dr. Warton of the critical works which have been produced since the first publication of the preceding Essay, it cannot surely be denied that the same interval has been productive of many works of superlative genius, or that the flame, instead of declining, has been invigorated by some of the productions of our own times.—If on the whole, the efforts of our contemporaries have not rivalled those of former times, we may be assured it is not from too close an adherence to the acknowledged rules of art; but from the indolence that treats them with neglect, or the ignorance that holds them in contempt.

THE

RAPE OF THE LOCK.

AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM.

Written in the Year

MDCCXII.

TO MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR.

MADAM,

IT will be in vain to deny that I have some regard for this piece, since I dedicate it to You. Yet you may bear me witness, it was intended only to divert a few young Ladies, who have good sense and good humour enough to laugh not only at their sex's little unguarded follies, but at their own. But as it was communicated with the air of a Secret, it soon found its way into the world. An imperfect copy having been offered to a Bookseller, you had the good-nature, for my sake, to consent to the publication of one more correct: This I was forced to, before I had executed half my design, for the Machinery was entirely wanting to complete it.

The Machinery, Madam, is a term invented by the Critics, to signify that part which the Deities, Angels, or Demons, are made to act in a Poem: For the ancient Poets are in one respect like many modern Ladies; let an action be never so trivial in itself, they always make it appear of the utmost importance. These Machines I determined to raise on a very new and odd foundation, the Rosicrucian doctrine of Spirits.

I know how disagreeable it is to make use of hard words before a Lady; but 'tis so much the concern of a Poet to have his works understood, and particularly by your Sex, that you must give me leave to explain two or three difficult terms.

The Rosicrucians are a people I must bring you acquainted with. The best account I know of them is in a French book, called Le Comte de Gabalis, which both in its title and size is so like a Novel, that many of the Fair Sex have read it for one by mistake. According to these Gentlemen the four Elements are inhabited by Spirits, which they call Sylphs, Gnomes, Nymphs, and Salamanders. The Gnomes or Demons of Earth delight in mischief; but the Sylphs, whose habitation is in the Air, are the best conditioned Creatures imaginable. For they say, any mortals may enjoy the most intimate familiarities with these gentle Spirits, upon a condition very easy to all true Adepts, an inviolate preservation of Chastity.

As to the following Cantos, all the passages of them are as fabulous, as the Vision at the beginning, or the Transformation at the end; (except the loss of your Hair, which I always mention with reverence). The Human persons are as fictitious as the Airy ones; and the character of Belinda, as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing but in Beauty.

If this Poem had as many Graces as there are in your Person, or in your Mind, yet I could never

hope it should pass through the world half so uncensured as You have done. But let its fortune be what it will, mine is happy enough, to have given me this occasion of assuring you that I am, with the truest esteem,

Madam,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

A. Pope.

This Lady was also celebrated by Parnell in a poem not published by Pope, as follows, on her leaving London:

"From town fair Arabella flies:
The beaux unpowder'd grieve;
The rivers play before her eyes;
The breezes, softly-breathing, rise;
The spring begins to live.

Her lovers swore, they must expire:
Yet quickly find their ease;
For, as she goes, their flames retire,
Love thrives before a nearer fire,
Esteem by distant rays.

Yet soon the fair-one will return,
When summer quits the plain;
Ye rivers pour the weeping urn;
Ye breezes, sadly-sighing, mourn;
Ye lovers, burn again.

'Tis constancy enough in love
That nature's fairly shewn:
To search for more, will fruitless prove,
Romances and the turtle-dove,
That virtue boast alone." *Warton.*

If the moderns have excelled the ancients in any species of writing, it seems to be in satire; and, particularly in that kind of satire which is conveyed in the form of the epopee, a pleasing vehicle of satire, seldom, if ever, used by the ancients; for we know so little of the Margites of Homer, that it cannot well be produced as an example. As the poet disappears in this way of writing, and does not deliver the intended censure in his own proper person, the satire becomes more delicate, because more oblique. Add to this, that a tale or story more strongly engages and interests the reader, than a series of precepts or reproofs, or even of characters themselves, however lively or natural. An heroi-comic poem may therefore be justly esteemed the most excellent kind of satire. The invention of it is usually ascribed to Alessandro Tassoni; who, in the year 1612, published at Paris a poem composed by him, in a few months of the year 1611, entitled, La Secchia Rapita, or The Rape of the Bucket. To avoid giving offence, it was first printed under the name of Androvini Melisoni. It was afterwards reprinted at Venice, corrected, with the name of the author, and with some illustrations of Gasparo Salviani. But the learned and curious Crescembini, in his Istoria della Volgar Poesia, informs us, that it is doubtful whether the invention of the heroi-comic poem ought to be ascribed to Tassoni, or to Francesco Bracciolini, who wrote Lo Scherno degli Dei, which performance, though it was printed four years after La Secchia, is nevertheless declared, in an epistle prefixed, to have been written many years sooner. The real subject of Tassoni's poem was the war which the inhabitants of Modena declared against those of Bologna, on the refusal of the latter to restore to them some towns, which had been detained ever since the time of the Emperor Frederic II. The author artfully made use of a popular tradition, according to which it was believed, that a certain wooden bucket, which is kept at Modena, in the treasury of the cathedral, came from Bologna, and that it had been forcibly taken away by the Modenese. Crescembini adds, that because Tassoni had severely ridiculed the Bolognese, Bartolomeo Bocchini, to revenge his countrymen, printed, at Venice, 1641, a tragico-heroi-comic poem,

entitled, Le Pazzie dei Savi, ovvero, Il Lambertaccio, in which the Modenese are spoken of with much contempt. The Italians have a fine turn for works of humour, in which they abound. They have another poem of this species, called Malmantile Racquistato, written by Lorenzo Lippi, in the year 1676, which Crescembini highly commends, calling it, "Spiritosissimo e leggiadrissimo poema giocoso." It was afterwards reprinted at Florence, 1688, with the useful annotations of Puccio Lamoni, a Florentine painter, who was himself no contemptible poet. To these must be added, the lively and amusing poem called Ricciardetto. In the Adventurer, No. 133, I formerly endeavoured to shew the superiority of the moderns over the ancients, in all the species of ridicule, and to point out some of the reasons for this supposed superiority. It is a subject that deserves a much longer discussion. Among other reasons given, it is there said, that though democracies may be the nurses of true sublimity, yet monarchy and courts are more productive of politeness. Hence the arts of civility, and the decencies of conversation, as they unite men more closely, and bring them together more frequently, multiply opportunities of observing those incongruities and absurdities of behaviour, on which ridicule is founded. The ancients had more liberty and seriousness; the moderns more luxury and laughter In a word, our forms of government, the various consequent ranks in society, our commerce, manners, habits, riches, courts, religious controversies, intercourse with women, late age of the world in which we live, and new arts, have opened sources of ridicule unavoidably unknown to the ancients.

The Rape of the Lock is the fourth, and most excellent of the heroi-comic poems. The subject was a quarrel, occasioned by a little piece of gallantry of Lord Petre, who, in a party of pleasure, found means to cut off a favourite lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. On so slight a foundation has he raised this beautiful superstructure; like a Fairy palace in a desart. Pope was accustomed to say, "what I wrote fastest always pleased most." The first sketch of this exquisite piece, which Addison called Merum Sal, was written in less than a fortnight, in two Cantos only; but it was so universally applauded, that, in the next year, our poet enriched it with the machinery of the Sylphs, and extended it to five Cantos; when it was printed, with a Letter to Mrs. Fermor, far superior to any of Voiture. The insertion of the machinery of the

Sylphs in proper places, without the least appearance of its being aukwardly stitched in, is one of the happiest efforts of judgment and art. He took the idea of these invisible beings, so proper to be employed in a poem of this nature, from a little French book entitled, Le Comte de Gabalis, of which is given the following account, in an entertaining writer: "The Abbé Villars, who came from Thoulouse to Paris, to make his fortune by preaching, is the author of this diverting work. The five dialogues of which it consists, are the result of those gay conversations, in which the Abbé was engaged, with a small circle of men, of fine wit and humour, like himself. When this book first appeared, it was universally read, as innocent and amusing. But at length its consequences were perceived, and reckoned dangerous, at a time when this sort of curiosities began to gain credit. Our devout preacher was denied the chair, and his book forbidden to be read. It was not clear whether the author intended to be ironical, or spoke all seriously. The second volume, which he promised, would have decided the question; but the unfortunate Abbé was soon afterwards assassinated by ruffians, on the road to Lyons. The laughers gave out, that the Gnomes and Sylphs, disguised like ruffians, had shot him, as a punishment for revealing the secrets of the Cabala; a crime not to be pardoned by these jealous spirits, as Villars himself has declared in his book." *Warton.*

That poetry does not depend on the nature or choice of the subject, is a truth that never was more fully exemplified than in the following production. A circumstance of the most trivial kind—a lock of hair cut in familiar sport from the head of a Lady by one of her admirers; what are the materials for poetry that such an event affords? To Cowley it might have suggested some quaint witticisms or forced allusions; to Waller or Suckling a metaphysical song; Dryden would have celebrated it in some strong lines, remarkable for their poetical spirit, and perhaps not less so for their indelicacy; whilst by the general tribe of poets, it never could have been extended further than to a smart epigram, or a frigid sonnet. What is it in the hands of Pope? an animated and moving picture of human life and manners; a lively representation of the whims and follies of the times; an important contest, in which we find ourselves deeply engaged; for the interest is so supported, the manner so ludicrously serious, the characters so

marked and distinguished, the resentment of the heroine so natural, and the triumph of the conqueror so complete, that we unavoidably partake the emotions of the parties, and alternately sympathize, approve, or condemn. We mount with the poet upon his Hippogryph, and resign ourselves to his guidance; till after conducting us through imaginary skies, and realms of fairy-land, he sets us down once more on the borders of reality; and we feel only surprize at the extent, the beauty, and the variety of the regions through which we have passed.

Dr. Warton has endeavoured to shew, that this style of writing was invented by the Italians; and in proof of it, has referred to the *Secchia Rapita* of Tassoni, and the *Malmantile Racquistato* of Lorenzo Lippi, with the Annotations of Paolo Minucci, (the real name of the author whom Dr. Warton mentions by his anagrammatic appellation of Puccio Lamoni) as also to the more recent poem of *Ricciardetto*, by Niccolo Forteguerra, of the first canto of which, Lord Glenbervie has lately favoured us with an English translation; but the truth is, that these poems are in their nature essentially different from the Rape of the Lock, and most probably never once occurred to the author in the course of his labours. The most marked distinction is, that in the Italian poets, the wit and humour consist in the expression; in Pope, they are in the thought or conception. In the Italian poems, the subject is constantly rendered ridiculous, by an unintermitted succession of strange comparisons, singular proverbs, provincial idioms, and whimsical jests; intended to keep the reader in continual laughter. On the contrary, the poem of Pope is written in a style professedly serious, and with an elegance and propriety of diction not exceeded in any of his works. The reader does not laugh; but he enjoys perhaps an equal, and certainly a more refined and intellectual pleasure, in the delicacy of the allusions, the alternate approach and receding of fiction and reality, the fanciful beings that float upon his imagination, and the ever-shifting scene by which he is surrounded. In short, he is for a time, as it were, carried out of himself; whilst in the perusal of the Italian poems, he feels himself standing on the earth, and listening to a performer, who, by dint of jokes and grimaces, endeavours to keep him in perpetual good humour.

The only production that can, with any propriety, be placed in comparison with the *Rape of the Lock*, is the *Lutrin* of Boileau. This poem, which originated from a circumstance as trivial as that which gave rise to the former, affords no less striking a proof of

the power of genius, which, like transparent amber, can render a fly or a straw an object of curiosity and admiration. Boileau has himself recorded the motives which induced him to undertake it, and which may serve most decidedly to shew that no limits can be prescribed to the exertions of imagination, and that where the mind is impregnated with genius and fancy, the smallest spark will serve to call them into action. He had asserted in company, what he had before stated in his Art of Poetry, "that an heroic poem ought to be charged with little matter, which it is the business of *invention* to support and extend." This led to a warm contest, in which neither of the parties was convinced, and ended in their moralizing on the warmth with which each had supported his opinions, and on the folly of those who pass their whole lives in making trifles of importance. To exemplify this, one of the company related a story, of a quarrel that had taken place between the two chief dignitaries of a church in his neighbourhood, about the placing a *Lutrin*, or reading desk, which appearing to the company, to be a very trifling and ridiculous affair, one of them asked Boileau, whether, as he thought so little matter was necessary for an heroic poem, he could write one on such an incident, "*Why not?*" replied the poet; the company laughed, and Boileau with them; but on returning home in the evening he revolved it in his mind, and perceiving it was capable of producing no little amusement, he wrote twenty verses, which he shewed to his friends, and their approbation induced him to proceed, till he had finished the poem. The success of this attempt may be taken as a decisive proof, that he was right in the opinion he had advanced; and may serve to demonstrate, that the mere choice of a subject can never give any pretensions to superiority; but that the genius of the poet is all in all.

To compare the Poems of Pope and of Boileau with each other, in order to decide which of them is entitled to the preference, would be a fruitless attempt. The *Lutrin* is, strictly speaking, national. The peculiarities, frailties, and follies of luxurious canons and idle monks, and the abuses in French jurisprudence and manners, are not perhaps sufficiently understood in other countries to enable us to perceive, in their full extent, the fine touches of wit and raillery, which doubtless appeared to the contemporaries of the poet to be the most exquisite part of his work. The persons introduced as objects of his animadversion are unknown to us, and the satire is consequently lost. The difference that subsists between

the two countries in point of religion, renders it impossible we should perceive the circumstances and events referred to in the *Lutrin* in the same light as the countrymen of the poet. The long establishment and splendour of their hierarchy, the number and importance of its ministers, and the respect paid to every thing that related to them, form a strong contrast with the trivial occurrence that gave rise to the poem, which we are not fully able to perceive: nor are the frequent and extravagant compliments which Boileau has introduced to his ostentatious monarch, likely to be felt as the poet intended, either on this, or his own side of the channel.

How far the poem of Pope may be liable to similar observations it is not so easy to determine. Ayre, in reference to the Italian and French translations, observes, that "the Italian ladies can but wonder that so young and fine a creature as Belinda, should be so long unguarded by her mother, aunt, or some one, whose business it should have been to have taken care of her *lock*, and her reputation too; while the French ladies see nothing to grieve at, and say, what hindered her from wearing a *tête* with curls as long again." On the whole, however, the subject of it may be regarded as more general, and consequently more capable of being appreciated by strangers, than the poem of Boileau. The common affections and passions of human nature, and even the manners of fashionable life, bear a much nearer resemblance in all countries, than those of any particular profession or sect; and there seems not much in the Rape of the Lock that may not be perceived at Paris, or at Rome, or even at Vienna, or Petersburg, nearly as well as in London.

Nor does the Rape of the Lock differ more from the Lutrin in its nature and subject, than in the execution, or manner of effecting the purpose intended. The object of the one is Satire, that of the other Pleasantry—that of the one is to ridicule and to reprove, of the other to amuse and to reconcile; and the means adopted for those purposes are appropriate and peculiar to each. Boileau has introduced a series of allegorical personages, who according to the prescribed rules for Epic Poetry, are supposed to influence or direct the conduct of the parties. Justice, Piety, Discord, and Chicanery, are strongly characterized, and perform their respective parts. These personages, as being modifications of human feelings or passions, are well calculated for a poem of a satirical

or moral kind, where the object is to impress some serious or important truth. Thus when Piety retires to the heights of the Alps, the professors of Religion quarrel respecting the merest trifles; but when she returns, and consults with *Themis*, or Justice, their disputes are extinguished. Pope, who had originally published his Poem in two Cantos, not only saw the necessity of enlivening it by poetical imagery, but he saw at the same time, the impropriety of resorting either to the divinities of the ancients, or the allegories of the moderns for that purpose; and having, as he informs us, fortunately met with a French book, called Le Comte de Gabalis, in which the four elements are said to be inhabited by spirits, called Sylphs, Gnomes, Nymphs, and Salamanders; he enlisted these imaginary beings in his service, as suitable agents for his purpose. But although he was indebted to this idea of the Rosicrucians for his machinery, the use he has made of them is wholly his own.

It is therefore to no purpose to compare the Rape of the Lock with either the Lutrin of Boileau, or the productions of the Italian Poets, with a view of ascertaining the poetical precedence of their authors. They differ from each other, as well by the means employed, as in the end proposed, and can none of them be either exalted or degraded by a comparison with the others. After all that can be said on the subject, it is most probable that each country will give the preference to the production of its own poet.

The Rape of the Lock had the honour of being translated into French by the Princess of Conti, and printed at Paris, 1728. It was translated into Italian by the Marquis Rangoni, envoy from the Duke of Modena to George II., and also by the Abate Conti, a noble Venetian, but with some *lacune*, or omissions, which were supplied in a new translation, published at Milan, in 1819, 8vo. under the title of "*Il Riccio rapito, di Alessandro Pope, tradotto ed illustrato da G. Vincenzo Benini.*"

A third translation appeared at Pisa in 1820; together with the Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard, in a volume, entitled "*Poesie di Alessandro Pope, tradotte da Micheli Leone, in 16mo.*"

Of these translations, the last is considered as the most faithful; that of Benini being rather a paraphrase, in which the Translator has frequently intermixed his own ideas with those of the original.

THE

RAPE OF THE LOCK.

*Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis. MART.

CANTO I.

WHAT dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing—This verse to CARYL, Muse! is due:
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:

NOTES.

* It appears by this Motto, that the following Poem was written or published at the Lady's request. But there are some further circumstances not unworthy relating. Mr. Caryl (a Gentleman who was Secretary to Queen Mary, wife of James II. whose fortunes he followed into France, Author of the Comedy of Sir Solomon Single, and of several translations in Dryden's Miscellanies) originally proposed the subject to him, in a view of putting an end, by this piece of ridicule, to a quarrel that was risen between two noble Families, those of Lord Petre and of Mrs. Fermor, on the trifling occasion of his having cut off a lock of her hair. The Author sent it to the Lady, with whom he was acquainted; and she took it so well as to give about copies of it. That first sketch (we learn from one of his Letters) was written in less than a fortnight, in 1711, in two Cantos only, and it was so printed; first, in a Miscellany of Bern. Lintot's, without the name of the Author. But it was received so well, that he made it more considerable the next year by the addition of the machinery of the Sylphs, and extended it to five Cantos. We shall give the reader the pleasure of seeing in what manner these additions were inserted, so as to seem not to be added, but to grow out of the Poem. See Notes, Cant. I. ver. 19, &c. P.

Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If She inspire, and He approve my lays.
  Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred Lord t' assault a gentle Belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,
Could make a gentle Belle reject a Lord?
In tasks so bold, can little men engage,
And in soft bosoms, dwells such mighty rage?
  Sol through white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And ope'd those eyes that must eclipse the day:
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.

NOTES.

Ver. 10. *Could make a gentle Belle*] "The characters introduced in this poem were Mr. Caryl, just before mentioned; Belinda was Mrs. Arabella Fermor; the Baron was Lord Petre, of small stature, who soon after married a great heiress, Mrs. Warmsley, and died, leaving a posthumous son; Thalestris was Mrs. Morly; Sir Plume was her brother, Sir George Brown, of Berkshire." Copied from a MS. in a book presented by R. Lord Burlington, to Mr. William Sherwin. *Warton.*

Ver. 18. *silver sound.*] Boileau, at an entertainment given by Segrais, was engaged to read his Lutrin; when he came to this passage in the first canto,

"Les cloches dans les airs de leur voix argentines,"

Chapelle

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 11, 12. It was in the first editions,

And dwells such rage in softest bosoms then,
And lodge such daring Souls in little Men? *P.*

Ver. 13, &c. stood thus in the first edition,

Sol through white curtains did his beams display,
And ope'd those eyes which brighter shone than they:

Shock

Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
Her guardian SYLPH prolong'd the balmy rest:
'Twas He had summon'd to her silent bed
The morning-dream that hover'd o'er her head,
A Youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau,
(That e'en in slumber caus'd her cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say.

NOTES.

Chapelle, who was one of the company, and who, as usual, had drank freely, stopt him, and objected strongly to the expression, *silver sounds*. Boileau disregarded his objections, and continued to read; but Chapelle again interrupting him, "You are drunk," said Boileau; "I am not so much intoxicated with wine (replied Chapelle) as you are with your own verses." It is a singular circumstance that Boileau was buried in the very spot on which the Lutrin stood. *Warton.*

"*Silver sound*," is a combination often used by the early English Poets. Spenser uses it, Shakespear, Dryden, and our Author very frequently. Hence Shakespear's humourous dialogue in Romeo and Juliet;

"*Peter*. Why music with her *silver sound*?—What say you, Simon Catling?

1 *Mus*. Marry, Sir; because silver hath a sweet sound.

Peter. Pretty!—What say you, Hugh Rebeck?—

2 *Mus*. I say, *silver sound*; because Musicians sound for silver.

Peter. Pretty too!—What say you, James Sound-post?

3 *Mus*. Faith, I know not what to say." (Act 4th.)

Bowles.

Ver. 19. *Belinda still, &c.*] All the verses from hence to the end of this Canto were added afterwards. *P.*

VARIATIONS.

Shock just had given himself the rousing shake,
And Nymphs prepar'd their Chocolate to take;
Thrice the wrought slipper knock'd against the ground,
And striking watches the tenth hour resound. *P.*

Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one Vision touch'd thy infant thought,
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught;
Of airy Elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,
Or virgins visited by Angel-powers
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs;
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:

NOTES.

Ver. 27. *Fairest of mortals,*] These machines were vastly superior to the allegorical personages of Boileau and Garth; not only on account of their novelty, but for the exquisite poetry, and oblique satire, which they have given the poet an opportunity to display. The business and petty concerns of a fine lady, receive an air of importance from the notion of their being perpetually overlooked and conducted by the interposition of celestial agents. The first time these beings were mentioned by any writer in our language was by Sir W. Temple, Essays, iv. p. 255. "I should (says he) as soon fall into the study of the Rosicrucian philosophy, and expect to meet a Nymph or a Sylph for a wife or a mistress." They are also mentioned in a letter of Dryden to Mrs. Thomas, 1699; "Whether Sylph or Nymph I know not; those fine creatures, as your author, Count Gabalis, assures us, have a mind to be christened, and since you desire a name from me, take that of Corinna, if you please." Sylphs are mentioned, as invisible attendants, and as interested in the affairs of the ladies, in the 101st, 104th, and 195th, of Madame de Sevigné's celebrated Letters; as they are also in the second chapter of Le Sage's Diable Boiteux. M. de Sevigné says, remarkably enough, letter 90, "If we had a few Sylphs at our command now, one might furnish out a story to divert you with." *Warton.*

What tho' no credit doubting Wits may give?
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.
Know then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,
The light Militia of the lower sky:
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the wing,
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring,
Think what an equipage thou hast in Air,
And view with scorn two Pages and a Chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,
And once inclos'd in Woman's beauteous mould;
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly Vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when Woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead;
Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
Her joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,
And love of Ombre, after death survive.
For when the Fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements their Souls retire:
The Sprites of fiery Termagants in Flame
Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.
Soft yielding minds to Water glide away,
And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental Tea.

NOTES.

Ver. 47. *As now your own, &c.*] The Poet here forsakes the Rosicrucian system; which, in this part, is too extravagant even for ludicrous Poetry; and gives a beautiful fiction of his own, on the Platonic Theology, of the continuance of the passions in another state, when the mind, before its leaving this, has not been well purged and purified by philosophy; which furnishes an occasion for much useful satire. *Warburton.*

The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of Air.

Know further yet; whoever fair and chaste
Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd:
For Spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
What guards the purity of melting Maids,
In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?

NOTES.

Ver. 67. *Know further yet;*] Marmontel has, on this idea, framed one of his most popular Tales. I must again and again repeat, that it is on account of the exquisite skill, and humour, and pleasantry of the use made of the machinery of the Sylphs, that this poem has excelled all the heroi-comic poems in all languages. The Ver-vert of Gresset, in point of delicate satire, is perhaps next to it, but far inferior for the want of such machinery. *Warton.*

Ver. 68. *Is by some Sylph embrac'd:*] Here again the Author resumes the Rosicrucian system. But this tenet, peculiar to that wild philosophy, was founded on a principle very unfit to be employed in such a sort of poem, and therefore suppressed, though a less judicious writer would have been tempted to expatiate upon it. *Warburton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 54, 55. "Quæ gratia currûm
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos."
Virg. Æneid, vi. *P.*

'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,
Though Honour is the word with Men below.
Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
For life predestin'd to the Gnomes embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdain'd, and love deny'd:
Then gay Ideas croud the vacant brain,
While Peers, and Dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And Garters, Stars, and Coronets appear,
And in soft sounds, YOUR GRACE salutes their ear.
'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young Coquettes to roll,
Teach Infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a Beau.
Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
The Sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way,
Through all the giddy circle they pursue,
And old impertinence expel by new.
What tender maid but must a victim fall
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving Toyshop of their heart;

NOTES.

Ver. 78. *Though Honour is the word with Men below.*] Parody of Homer. *Warburton.*

Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals Levity may call,
Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.
Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
Late, as I rang'd the crystal wilds of air,
In the clear mirror of thy ruling Star
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
Ere to the main this morning sun descend,
But heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:
Warn'd by the Sylph, oh pious maid, beware!
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!
He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leap'd up, and wak'd his mistress with his tongue;

NOTES.

Ver. 108. *In the clear mirror*] The language of the Platonists, the writers of the intelligible world of Spirits, &c. *P.*

Ver. 113. *This to disclose, &c.*] There is much pleasantry in the conduct of this scene. The Rosicrucian Doctrine was delivered only to Adepts, with the utmost caution, and under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy. It is here communicated to a Woman, and in that way of conveyance, which a Woman most delights to make the subject of her conversation; that is to say, her Dreams. *Warburton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 101.

" Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,
Ense minax ensis, pede pes, et cuspide cuspis," &c. Stat.
Warburton.

'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
Thy eyes first open'd on a Billet-doux;
Wounds, Charms, and Ardours, were no sooner read,
But all the Vision vanish'd from thy head.
And now, unveil'd, the Toilet stands display'd,
Each silver Vase in mystic order laid.

NOTES.

Ver. 121. *And now, unveil'd, &c.*] The translation of these verses, containing the description of the toilet, by our Author's friend, Dr. Parnell, deserve, for their humour, to be here inserted.

" Et nunc dilectum speculum, pro more retectum,
Emicat in mensa, quæ splendet pyxide densa:
Tum primum lympha se purgat candida Nympha,
Jamque sine menda, cœlestis imago videnda,
Nuda caput, bellos retinet, regit, implet ocellos.
Hæc stupet implorans, ceu cultûs numen adorans.
Inferior claram Pythonissa apparet ad aram,
Fertque tibi caute, dicatque Superbia! laute,
Dona venusta; oris, quæ cunctis, plena laboris,
Excerpta explorat, dominamque deamque decorat.
Pyxide devota, se pandit hic India tota,
Et tota ex ista transpirat Arabia cista;
Testudo hic flectit dum se mea Lesbia pectit;
Atque elephas lente, te pectit Lesbia dente;
Hunc maculis noris, nivei jacet ille coloris.
Hic jacet et munde, mundus muliebris abunde;
Spinula resplendens aeris longo ordine pendens,
Pulvis suavis odore, et epistola suavis amore,
Induit arma ergo Veneris pulcherrima virgo;
Pulchrior in præsens tempus de tempore crescens,
Jam reparat risus, jam surgit gratia visus,
Jam promit cultu, mirac'la latentia vultu;
Pigmina jam miscet, quo plus sua Purpura gliscet,
Et geminans bellis splendet mage fulgor ocellis.
Stant Lemures muti, Nymphæ intentique saluti,
Hic figit Zonam, capiti locat ille Coronam,
Hæc manicis formam, plicis dat et altera normam,

First, rob'd in white, the Nymph intent adores,
With head uncover'd, the Cosmetic pow'rs.
A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
Th' inferior Priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of Pride.
Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
The various off'rings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box:

NOTES.

Et tibi vel *Betty* tibi vel nitidissima *Letty!*
Gloria factorum temere conceditur horum." *Warburton.*

Warton observes, that "some of these Latin lines are not classical;" perhaps this was intended, as being more like the Monkish. The accents of "*Sinĕ*, *Arŭbia*," &c. are wrong. *Bowles.*

Ver. 122. *Each silver Vase*] Parnell accidentally hearing Pope repeat this description of the Toilette, privately turned them into these Monkish Latin verses, and Pope, to whom he immediately communicated them, was astonished at the resemblance, till Parnell undeceived him. Mr. Harte told me, that Dryden had been imposed on by a similar little stratagem. One of his friends translated into Latin verse, printed, and pasted on the bottom of an old hat-box, a translation of that celebrated passage,

"To die is landing on some silent shore," &c.

and that Dryden, on opening the box, was alarmed and amazed. *Warton.*

Ver. 131. *From each she*] Evidently from Addison's Spectator, No. 69; "The single dress of a woman of quality is often the product of an hundred climates. The muff and the fan come together from the different ends of the earth. The scarf is sent from the Torrid Zone, and the tippet from beneath the Pole. The brocade petticoat arises out of the mines of Peru, and the diamond necklace out of the bowels of Indostan." *Warton.*

The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transform'd to combs, the speckled, and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,
These set the head, and those divide the hair,
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own.

NOTES.

Ver. 145. *The busy Sylphs, &c.*] Ancient Traditions of the Rabbis relate, that several of the fallen Angels became amorous of women, and particularise some; among the rest Asael, who lay with Naamah, the wife of Noah, or of Ham; and who continuing impenitent, still presides over the women's toilets. Bereshi Rabbi, in Genes. vi. 2. *P.*

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

CANTO II.

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair Nymphs, and well-drest Youths around her shone,
But ev'ry eye was fix'd on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling Cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those;
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if Belles had faults to hide;
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.
This Nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourish'd two Locks, which graceful hung behind

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 4. *Launch'd on the bosom; &c.*] From hence the poem continues, in the first Edition, to ver. 46.

" The rest the winds dispers'd in empty air;"

all after, to the end of this Canto, being additional. *P.*

In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck,
With shining ringlets, the smooth iv'ry neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.
Th' advent'rous Baron the bright locks admir'd;
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspir'd.
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a Lover's toil attends,
Few ask, if fraud or force attain'd his ends.
For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implor'd
Propitious heav'n, and ev'ry pow'r ador'd,
But chiefly Love—to Love an Altar built,
Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves;
With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire.

NOTES.

Ver. 28. *with a single hair.*] In allusion to those lines of Hudibras, applied to the same purpose:

" And tho' it be a two foot Trout,
'Tis with a single hair pull'd out." *Warburton.*

PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Ver. 28. *And beauty draws us, &c.*] Steevens quotes Buchanan's Epigrams, lib. I. xiv. p. 77.

" Et modo membra *pilo vinctus* miser abstrahor *uno.*"
" One hair of thine in fetters ties." *Sandys.*

Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r,
The rest, the winds dispers'd in empty air.
But now secure the painted Vessel glides,
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides:
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And soften'd sounds along the waters die;
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.
All but the Sylph—with careful thoughts oppress,
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons straight his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,
That seem'd but Zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,
Dipp'd in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes;
While ev'ry beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd;

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 45. *The pow'rs gave ear,*] Virg. Æneid. xi. *P.*

His purple pinions op'ning to the sun,
He rais'd his azure wand, and thus begun.
Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear!
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Demons, hear!
Ye know the spheres, and various tasks assign'd
By laws eternal to th' aërial kind.

NOTES.

Ver. 75. *Ye know*] Those who are fond of tracing images and sentiments to their source, may, perhaps, be inclined to think, that the hint of ascribing tasks and offices to such imaginary beings, is taken from the Fairies, and the Ariel of Shakespear; let the impartial critic determine, which has the superiority of fancy. The employment of Ariel in the Tempest, is said to be

—— "To tread the ooze
Of the salt deep;
To run upon the sharp wind of the north;
To do—business in the veins of th' earth,
When it is bak'd with frost;
—— To dive into the fire; to ride
On the curl'd clouds."

And again,

—— "In the deep nook, where once
Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still vext Bermoothes."

Nor must I omit that exquisite song, in which his favourite and peculiar pastime is expressed:

"Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry;
On the bat's back I do fly,
After sun-set, merrily;
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough."

With what wildness of imagination, but yet with what propriety, are the amusements of the fairies pointed out in the Midsummer Night's Dream; amusements proper for none but fairies!

—— "For

Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.
Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
Or roll the planets through the boundless sky.
Some less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.

NOTES.

——— " For the third part of a minute, hence:
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds:
Some war with rear-mice for their leathern wings
To make my small elves coats; and some keep back
The clamourous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders
At our quaint spirits."———

Shakespear only could have thought of the following gratifications for Titania's lover; and they are fit only to be offered to her lover by a fairy-queen.

" Be kind and courteous to this gentleman,
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricots and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries,
The honey-bags steal from the humble bees,
And for night tapers crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes."

If it should be thought that Shakespear has the merit of being the first who assigned proper employments to imaginary persons, in the foregoing lines, yet it must be granted that by the addition of the most delicate satire to the most lively fancy, Pope, in a following passage (ver. 91) has equalled any thing in Shakespear, or perhaps in any other author. *Warton.*

Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British Throne.
  Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious care;
To save the powder from too rude a gale,
Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale;
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs;
To steal from rainbows ere they drop in show'rs
A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;
Nay oft, in dreams, invention we bestow,
To change a Flounce, or add a Furbelow.
  This day, black omens threat the brightest Fair
That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight;
But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night.
Whether the Nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;

NOTES.

Ver. 90. *And guard with Arms*] The Poet was too judicious to desire this should be understood as a compliment. He intended it for a mere piece of raillery; such as he more openly pursues on another occasion; when he says,

" Where's now the Star which lighted Charles to rise?
With that which follow'd Julius to the skies.
Angels, that watch'd the Royal Oak so well,
How chanc'd you slept when luckless Sorrel fell?"

Warburton.

Ver. 105. *Whether the nymph, &c.*] The disaster, which makes the subject of this poem, being a trifle, taken seriously; it naturally led the Poet into this fine satire on the female estimate of human mischances. *Warburton.*

Or stain her honour, or her new brocade;
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.
Haste then, ye spirits! to your charge repair:
The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite Lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.

To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,
We trust th' important charge, the Petticoat:
Oft have we known that seven-fold fence to fail,
Tho' stiff with hoops and arm'd with ribs of whale;
Form a strong line about the silver bound,
And guard the wide circumference around.

NOTES.

Ver. 112. *Zephyretta*] The names of his Sylphs are happily chosen. Castelvetro mentions an odd circumstance, that the names which Boiardo gave to his heroes in his Orlando Inamorato, were only the names of some of the principal tenants and peasants on his estate of Scandiano. *Warton.*

Ver. 118. *the Petticoat:*] It is impossible here not to recollect that matchless piece of raillery and exquisite humour, of Addison, in the 127th Spectator, on this important part of female dress. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 119.—clypei dominus septemplicis Ajax.—Ovid. *Warburton.*

Ver. 121. *about the silver bound,*] In allusion to the shield of Achilles:

"Thus the broad shield complete the Artist crown'd,
With his last hand, and pour'd the Ocean round:
In living silver seem'd the waves to roll,
And beat the Buckler's verge, and bound the whole."

Warburton.

Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,
Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins;
Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedg'd, whole ages, in a bodkin's eye:
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain;
Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r
Shrink his thin essence like a rivell'd flow'r:
Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!
He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

NOTES.

Ver. 125. *Shall feel sharp Vengeance*] Our Poet still rises in the delicacy of his satire, where he employs, with the utmost judgment and elegance, all the implements and furniture of the toilet, as instruments of punishment to those spirits, who shall be careless of their charge; of punishment, such as Sylphs alone could undergo.

If Virgil has merited such perpetual commendation for exalting his bees by the majesty and magnificence of his diction, does not Pope deserve equal praises, for the pomp and lustre of his language on so trivial a subject. *Warton.*

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

CANTO III.

Close by those meads, for ever crown'd with flow'rs,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name;
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign Tyrants, and of Nymphs at home;
Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes Tea.
Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort,
To taste awhile the pleasures of a Court;
In various talk th' instructive hours they past,
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At ev'ry word a reputation dies.
Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, *and all that.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 1. *Close by those meads,*] The first edition continues from this line to ver. 24 of this Canto. *P.*

Ver. 11, 12. Originally in the first edition,

In various talk the chearful hours they past,
Of, who was bit, or who capotted last. *P.*

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,
And the long labours of the Toilet cease.
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
Burns to encounter two advent'rous Knights,
At Ombre singly to decide their doom;
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,
Each band the number of the sacred Nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card:
First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,
Then each according to the rank they bore;
For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
Are, as when women, wond'rous fond of place.
Behold, four Kings, in majesty rever'd,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a flow'r,
Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;
Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band;
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;

NOTES.

Ver. 22. *And wretches hang*] From Congreve. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 24. *And the long labours of the Toilet cease.*] All that follows of the game at Ombre, was added since the first edition, till ver. 105, which connected thus,

Sudden the board with cups and spoons is crown'd. *P.*

And party-colour'd troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful Nymph reviews her force with care:
Let Spades be trumps! she said, and trumps they were.
Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio first, unconquerable Lord!
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forc'd to yield,
And march'd a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard
Gain'd but one trump and one Plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd,
The rest, his many-colour'd robe conceal'd.
The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.
Ev'n mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'er-threw,
And mow'd down armies in the fights of Lu,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguish'd by the victor Spade!
Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the Baron fate inclines the field.

NOTES.

Ver. 53. *Him Basto follow'd,*] The magnificent and majestic style in which this game of cards is described, artfully and finely heightens the ridicule. *Warton.*

Ver. 65. *Belinda yield;*] It is finely contrived that she should be victorious; as it occasions a change of fortune in the dreadful loss

His warlike Amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.
The Club's black Tyrant first her victim dy'd,
Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?
The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace!
Th' embroider'd King who shews but half his face,
And his refulgent Queen, with pow'rs combin'd
Of broken troops, an easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when dispers'd a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;
The pierc'd battalions disunited fall,
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

NOTES.

loss she was speedily to undergo, and gives occasion to the Poet to introduce a moral reflection from Virgil, which adds to the pleasantry of the story. In one of the passages where Pope has copied Vida, he has lost the propriety of the original, which arises from the different colours of the men, at Chess.

Thus, when dispers'd, a routed army runs, &c.

" Non aliter, campis legio se buxea utrinque
Composuit, duplici digestis ordine turmis,
Adversisque ambæ fulsere coloribus alæ;
Quam Gallorum acies, Alpino frigore lactea
Corpora, si tendant albis in prælia signis,
Auroræ populos contra, et Phæthonte perustos
Insano Æthiopas, et nigri Memnonis alas." *Warton.*

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this, the blood the Virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.
And now (as oft in some distemper'd State)
On one nice Trick depends the gen'ral fate:
An Ace of Hearts steps forth: The King unseen
Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive Queen:
He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.
Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.

NOTES.

Ver. 95. *An Ace of Hearts steps forth:*] Nothing can exceed Pope's powers of description, as displayed in this game of Cards. His mock-heroic paintings of the Kings, their ensigns, and characters, are inimitable. Warton in his Essay, speaking of Windsor Forest, says, descriptive Poetry was by no means the shining talent of Pope. Of rural objects Pope was not an able *describer*, as he could not be an *accurate observer;* but in description of scenes taken from *artificial Life*, his powers are very manifest. This distinction should be always attended to, in estimating Pope's poetical character. *Bowles.*

It is of no importance whether the materials are derived from real or artificial life, from objects of nature or of art; from the external, or the intellectual world. It is the use that the writer makes of them which determines his claim to the title of a poet.

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 101.]

" Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futuræ;
Et servare modum, rebus sublata secundis!

Turno

Sudden these honours shall be snatch'd away,
And curs'd for ever this victorious day.
For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crown'd,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoaking tide:
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the Fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)
Sent up in vapours to the Baron's brain
New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.
Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
Fear the just Gods, and think of Scylla's fate!

NOTES.

Ver. 105. *For lo! the board*] It is doubtless as hard to make a coffee-pot shine in poetry, as a plough; yet our author has succeeded in giving elegance to a familiar object, as well as Virgil. *Warton.*

Ver. 122. *and think of Scylla's fate!*] Vide Ovid's Metam. viii. *P.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 105. *For lo! the board, &c.*] From hence, the first Edition continues to ver. 134. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Turno tempus erit magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta; et cum spolia ista diemque
Oderit." Virg.

Chang'd to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injur'd hair!
But when to Mischief mortals bend their will,
How soon they find fit instruments of ill?
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edg'd weapon from her shining case:
So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprites repair,
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair;
And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear;
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the Virgin's thought:
As on the nosegay in her breast reclin'd,
He watch'd th' ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he view'd in spite of all her art,
An earthly Lover lurking at her heart.
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his pow'r expir'd,
Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retir'd.
The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring Forfex wide,
T' inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 134.] In the first Edition it was thus,
As o'er the fragrant stream she bends her head. *P.*

Ver. 147.]
First he expands the glitt'ring Forfex wide
T' inclose the Lock; then joins it to divide:

The

Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;
Fate urg'd the sheers, and cut the Sylph in twain,
(But airy substance soon unites again,)

NOTES.

Ver. 152. *But airy substance*] See Milton, lib. vi. of Satan cut asunder by the Angel Michael. *P.*

This line is an admirable parody on that passage of Milton, which, perhaps oddly enough, describes Satan wounded:

"The griding sword, with discontinuous wound,
Pass'd thro' him; but th' etherial substance clos'd,
Not long divisible."

The parodies are some of the most exquisite parts of this poem. That which follows from the "Dum juga montis aper," of Virgil, contains some of the most artful strokes of satire, and the most poignant ridicule imaginable.

The introduction of frequent parodies on serious and solemn passages of Homer and Virgil, gives much life and spirit to heroicomic poetry. "Tu dors, Prelat? tu dors?" in Boileau, is the "Ευδεις Ατρεϑ· υιε" of Homer, and is full of humour. The wife of the barber talks in the language of Dido, in her expostulations to her Æneas, at the beginning of the second Canto of the Lutrin. Pope's parodies of Sarpedon in Homer, and of the description of Achilles's sceptre, together with the scales of Jupiter, from Homer, Virgil, and Milton, are judiciously introduced in their several places, are perhaps superior to those Boileau or Garth have used, and are worked up with peculiar pleasantry. The mind of the reader is engaged by novelty, when it so unexpectedly finds a thought or object it had been accustomed to survey in another form, suddenly arrayed in a ridiculous garb. A mixture also of comic and ridiculous images, with such as are serious and important, adds no small beauty to this species of poetry, when real and imaginary distresses are coupled together.

"Not

VARIATIONS.

The meeting points the sacred hair dissever,
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever.

All that is between was added afterwards. *P.*

The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!
Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,
When husbands, or when lap-dogs breathe their last;
Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high,
In glitt'ring dust, and painted fragments lie!
Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,
(The Victor cry'd,) the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British Fair,
As long as Atalantis shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a Lady's bed,
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When num'rous wax-lights in bright order blaze,

NOTES.

" Not youthful kings, in battle seiz'd alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive," &c.
Which is much superior to a similar passage in the Dispensary, Canto v. *Warton.*

Ver. 165. *Atalantis*] A famous book written about that time by a woman: full of Court and Party scandal; and in a loose effeminacy of style and sentiment, which well-suited the debauched taste of the better vulgar. *Warburton.*

Mrs. Manley, the author of it, was the daughter of Sir Roger Manley, Governor of Guernsey, and the author of the first volume of the famous Turkish Spy, published, from his papers, by Dr. Midgley. She was known and admired by all the wits of the times. She wrote three plays; Lucius, the last, 1717, was dedicated to Sir Richard Steele, with whom she had quarrelled some time before. He wrote the prologue to it, and Prior the epilogue. She was also celebrated by Lord Lansdown. She died in the house of Alderman Barber, Swift's friend; and was said to have been the mistress of the Alderman. *Warton.*

While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!
What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
Steel could the labour of the Gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel
The conqu'ring force of unresisted Steel?

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 163, 170.]
" Dum juga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit,
Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt."
Virg. *P.*

Ver. 177.]
" Ille quoque eversus mons est, &c.
Quid faciant crines, cum ferro talia cedant?"
Catull. de Com. Berenices. *P.*

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

CANTO IV.

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppress'd,
And secret passions labour'd in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss,
Not ancient ladies when refus'd a kiss,
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinn'd awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
As thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair.
For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
As ever sully'd the fair face of light,
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,
Repair'd, to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.

NOTES.

Ver. 16. *Cave of Spleen.*]

" Thro' me ye pass to Spleen's terrific dome,
Thro' me to Discontent's eternal home!

Thro'

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 11. *For, that sad moment, &c.*] All the lines from hence to the 94th verse, that describe the house of Spleen, are not in the first Edition; instead of them followed only these,

While her rack'd Soul repose and peace requires,
The fierce Thalestris fans the rising fires.

And continued at the 94th verse of this Canto. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 1.] " At regina gravi," &c.—Virg. Æneid. iv. *P.*

Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,
And in a vapour reach'd the dismal dome.
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
The dreaded East is all the wind that blows.
Here in a grotto, shelter'd close from air,
And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,
She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.
Two handmaids wait the throne: alike in place,
But diff'ring far in figure and in face.
Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient maid,
Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd!
With store of pray'rs, for mornings, nights, and noons,
Her hand is fill'd; her bosom with lampoons.
There Affectation with a sickly mien,
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
Practis'd to lisp, and hang the head aside,
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,

NOTES.

Thro' me, to those who sadden'd human life,
By sullen humour or vexatious strife;
And here thro' scenes of endless vapour hurl'd,
Are punish'd in the forms they plagu'd the world;
Justly they feel no joy, who none bestow,
All ye who enter, every hope forego!

It is thus Mr. Hayley, in allusion to Dante's striking inscription over hell-gate, begins his description of the dwelling of Spleen. She and her attendants are afterwards painted with force and spirit in the next 200 verses, and more. His mild and engaging Serena, her prim and sour aunt Penelope, and the good old Squire, are admirable portraits. *Warton.*

On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,
Wrapt in a gown, for sickness, and for show.
The fair-ones feel such maladies as these,
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.
A constant Vapour o'er the palace flies;
Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise;
Dreadful, as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,
Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires:
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
And crystal domes, and Angels in machines.
Unnumber'd throngs, on ev'ry side are seen,
Of bodies chang'd to various forms by Spleen.
Here living Tea-pots stand, one arm held out,
One bent; the handle this, and that the spout:
A Pipkin there, like Homer's Tripod walks;
Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose-pye talks;

NOTES.

Ver. 41. *Dreadful, as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,*
Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.]

The Poet by this comparison would insinuate, that the temptations of the mortified Recluses in the Church of Rome, and the extatic visions of their female Saints, were as much the effects of hypochondriac disorders, the Spleen, or, what was then the fashionable word, the *Vapours*, as any of the imaginary transformations he speaks of afterwards. *Warburton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 51. *Homer's Tripod walks;*] See Hom. Iliad. xviii. of Vulcan's walking Tripods. *P.*

Ver. 52. *and there a Goose-pye talks;*] Alludes to a real fact, a Lady of distinction imagined herself in this condition. *P.*

Men prove with child, as pow'rful fancy works,
And maids turn'd bottles, call aloud for corks.
Safe past the Gnome through this fantastic band,
A branch of healing Spleenwort in his hand.
Then thus address'd the pow'r—Hail, wayward Queen!
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen:
Parent of vapours and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric, or poetic fit,
On various tempers act by various ways,
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray;
A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
But oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
Like citron-waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing Game;
If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,
Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,
Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,
Or discompos'd the head-dress of a Prude,

NOTES.

Ver. 53. *Men prove with child,*] Van Swieten, in his Commentaries on Boerhaave, relates, that he knew a man who had studied till he fancied his legs to be of glass; his maid bringing wood to his fire, threw it carelessly down; our sage was angry, and terrified for his legs of glass; the girl, out of patience with his megrims, gave him a blow with a log on the parts affected; he instantly started up in a rage, and from that moment recovered the use of his glass legs! *Warton.*

Or e'er to costive lap-dog gave disease,
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease:
Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin,
That single act gives half the world the spleen.
  The Goddess with a discontented air
Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his pray'r.
A wondrous Bag with both her hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;
There she collects the force of female lungs,
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.
A Vial next she fills with fainting fears,
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.
  Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,
Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound.
Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,
And all the Furies issu'd at the vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.
O wretched maid! she spread her hands, and cry'd,
(While Hampton's echoes, Wretched maid! reply'd)
Was it for this you took such constant care
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
For this your Locks in paper durance bound?
For this with tort'ring irons wreath'd around?
For this with fillets strain'd your tender head?
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the Fops envy, and the Ladies stare!

Honour forbid! at whose unrivall'd shrine
Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honour in a whisper lost!
How shall I, then, your hapless fame defend?
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Expos'd through crystal to the gazing eyes,
And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde-Park Circus grow,
And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to Chaos fall,
Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!
She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs:
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane)
With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case,

NOTES.

Ver. 121. *Sir Plume repairs,*] Sir George Brown. He was the only one of the Party who took the thing seriously. He was angry that the Poet should make him talk nothing but nonsense: and in truth one could not well blame him. *Warburton.*

An engraving of Sir Plume, with seven other figures, by Hogarth, was executed on the lid of a gold snuff-box, and presented to one of the parties concerned; the original impression of a print of it was sold, at Mr. Gulston's sale, for thirty-three pounds. *Warton.*

And thus broke out—"My Lord, why, what the devil!
"Z—ds! damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil.
"Plague on't! 'tis past a Jest—nay prithee, pox!
"Give her the hair"—he spoke, and rapp'd his box.
It grieves me much (reply'd the Peer again)
Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain,
But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear,
(Which never more shall join its parted hair;
Which never more its honours shall renew,
Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew)
That while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear.
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honours of her head.
But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;
He breaks the Vial whence the sorrows flow.
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in tears;
On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head,
Which, with a sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said.

NOTES.

Ver. 141. *But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;*
He breaks the Vial whence the sorrows flow.]

These two lines are additional; and assign the cause of the different operation on the Passions of the two Ladies. The poem went on before without that distinction, as without any Machinery, to the end of the Canto. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 133. *But by this Lock,*] In allusion to Achilles's oath in Homer, Il. i. *P.*

For ever curs'd be this detested day,
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away!
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,
If Hampton-Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of Courts to num'rous ills betray'd.
Oh had I rather un-admir'd, remain'd
In some lone Isle, or distant Northern land;
Where the gilt Chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!
There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in desarts bloom and die.
What mov'd my mind with youthful Lords to roam?
O had I stay'd, and said my pray'rs at home!
'Twas this the morning omens seem'd to tell,
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tott'ring China shook without a wind,
Nay Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
A Sylph too warn'd me of the threats of fate,
In mystic visions, now believ'd too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares:
These in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;

NOTES.

Ver. 163. *The tott'ring China*] The fatal prognostics that preceded the death of Cæsar, in the first Georgic of Virgil, are not imagined with more propriety, or could be more alarming.

Warton.

The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal sheers demands,
And tempts, once more, thy sacrilegious hands.
Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

CANTO V.

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears,
But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the Baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain,
While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.
Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her fan;
Silence ensu'd, and thus the Nymph began.
Say, why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd most,
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 7. *Then grave Clarissa, &c.*] A new Character introduced in the subsequent Editions, to open more clearly the Moral of the Poem, in a parody of the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus in Homer. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 9. *Say why are Beauties, &c.*] Homer.

" Why boast we, Glaucus! our extended reign,
Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain;
Our num'rous herds that range the fruitful field,
And hills where vines their purple harvest yield;
Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crown'd,
Our feasts enhanc'd with music's sprightly sound;
Why on those shores are we with joy survey'd,
Admir'd as heroes, and as Gods obey'd;
Unless great acts superior merit prove,
And vindicate the bounteous pow'rs above?

'Tis

Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford,
Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd?
Why round our coaches croud the white-glov'd Beaus,
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains:
That men may say, when we the front-box grace,
Behold the first in virtue as in face!
Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charm'd the small-pox, or chas'd old-age away;
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.

IMITATIONS.

'Tis ours, the dignity they give, to grace;
The first in valour, as the first in place:
That when with wond'ring eyes our martial bands
Behold our deeds transcending our commands,
Such, they may cry, deserve the sov'reign state,
Whom those that envy, dare not imitate.
Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,
Which claims no less the fearful than the brave,
For lust of fame I should not vainly dare
In fighting fields, nor urge thy soul to war.
But since, alas! ignoble age must come,
Disease, and death's inexorable doom;
The life which others pay, let us bestow,
And give to fame what we to nature owe;
Brave tho' we fall, and honour'd if we live,
Or let us glory gain, or glory give." *Warburton.*

This passage was the first specimen our author gave of his translation of Homer; and it appeared first in the sixth volume of Dryden's Miscellanies. *Warton.*

But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,
Curl'd or uncurl'd, since Locks will turn to grey;
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man, must die a maid;
What then remains but well our pow'r to use,
And keep good-humour still, whate'er we lose?
And trust me, dear! good-humour can prevail,
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul.
So spoke the Dame, but no applause ensu'd;
Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her Prude.
To arms, to arms! the fierce Virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and Heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,
And base and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

NOTES.

Ver. 26. *Curl'd or uncurl'd,*] Fontenelle writes a gallant and pleasant letter to a beautiful young lady on discovering *one* grey hair on her head. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 37. *To arms, to arms!*] From hence the first edition goes on to the conclusion, except a very few short insertions added, to keep the Machinery in view to the end of the poem. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 35. *So spoke the Dame,*] It is a verse frequently repeated in Homer after any speech,

"——So spoke—and all the Heroes applauded." *P.*

So when bold Homer makes the Gods engage,
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms:
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around,
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound:
Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives way,
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!

NOTES.

Ver. 45. *So when bold Homer*] Homer, Il. xx. *P.*

The ridicule is most artfully heightened by introducing one of the most sublime passages in Homer:

" Ἀμφι δ' ισαλπιγξεν μιγας ὀρανος, ἀλυμπος τε
Εδδεισεν δ' υπενερθεν αναξ ενερων Αιδωνευς,
Δεισας δ' εκ θρονυ αλτο και ιαχε, μη οι επειτα
Γαιαν αναρρηξειε Ποσειδαων ενοσιχθων
Οικια δε θνητοισι και αθανατοισι φανειη,
Σμερδαλα', ευρωεντα, τα τε στυγεουσι θεοι περ."

Well might Longinus exclaim, "Do you see, O my friend, how the earth bursts asunder to its centre, Tartarus itself is laid open and naked, all things mortal and immortal combat together, and share the danger of this tremendous conflict?"

In none of his many imitations has Virgil shewn his inferiority to Homer so much as in this passage:

" Non secus ac si qua penitus vi terra dehiscens
Infernas reseret sedes, et regna recludat
Pallida, Dis invisa; superque immane barathrum
Cernatur, trepidentque immisso lumine Manes."

Æneid, viii. v. 243.

For not to mention that what is part of the Action in Homer, is only a simile in Virgil, how tame is superque immane barathrum (even though a magnificent image) to

Δεισας δ' εκ θρονυ αλτο και ιαχε——

How or where has terror ever been so strongly painted as by this circumstance of Pluto himself, suddenly leaping from his throne and shrieking aloud? *Warton.*

Triumphant Umbriel on a sconce's height
Clapp'd his glad wings, and sate to view the fight:
Propp'd on their bodkin spears, the Sprites survey
The growing combat, or assist the fray.

While through the press enrag'd Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A Beau and Witling perish'd in the throng,
One dy'd in metaphor, and one in song.
"O cruel Nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cry'd Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,
"Those eyes are made so killing"—was his last.
Thus on Mæander's flow'ry margin lies
Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.

NOTES.

Ver. 55. *Propp'd on their*] Like the heroes in Homer, when they are spectators of a combat. *Warton.*

Ver. 64. "*Those eyes*] It was the common cant of all the wits and poets of this time to depreciate and laugh at Italian operas. See what Addison has said of them, Spectator 18. They would have been of a different opinion, if they could have read what Dr. Burney has said on this subject in his History of Music. *Warton.*

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 53. *Triumphant Umbriel*] These four lines added, for the reason before mentioned. *P.*

Added with great dexterity, beauty, and propriety! *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 53. *Triumphant Umbriel*] Minerva in like manner, during the battle of Ulysses with the Suitors in the Odyss. perches on a beam of the roof to behold it. *P.*

Ver. 64. "*Those eyes are made so killing*"] The words of a song in the Opera of Camilla. *P.*

Ver. 65. *Thus on Mæander's flow'ry margin lies*]

"Sic ubi fata vocant, udis abjectus in herbis,
Ad vada Mæandri concinit albus olor." Ov. Ep. *P.*

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a frown;
She smil'd to see the doughty hero slain,
But, at her smile, the Beau reviv'd again.
Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the Men's wits against the Lady's hair;
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.
See fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her eyes:
Nor fear'd the Chief th' unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
But this bold Lord with manly strength endu'd,
She with one finger and a thumb subdu'd;
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw,
The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust.

NOTES.

Ver. 71. *Now Jove, &c.*] Vid. Homer, Il. viii. and Virg. Æn. xii. *P.*

Ver. 74. *At length the wits*] This parody from Homer and Virgil is admirable. Milton improved on this fine fiction in Paradise Lost, Book iv. v. 997, by saying, that when "the Almighty weighed Satan in such scales, the mounting of his scales denoted ill success;" and also by alluding artfully to the sign of *Libra* in the heavens. *Warton.*

Ver. 84. *titillating dust.*] Boileau and Garth have also each of them enlivened their pieces with a mock-fight. But Boileau has laid the scene of his action in a neighbouring bookseller's shop; where the combatants encounter each other by chance. This conduct

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 83. *The Gnomes direct,*] These two lines added, for the above reason. *P.*

Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.
  Now meet thy fate, incens'd Belinda cry'd,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,
Her great great grandsire wore about his neck,
In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown:
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;
Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs,
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)
  Boast not my fall (he cry'd) insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low,
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind;
All that I dread is leaving you behind!
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive.

NOTES.

duct is a little inartificial; but has given the satirist an opportunity of indulging his ruling passion, the exposing bad poets, with which France, at that time, abounded. Swift's Battle of the Books, at the end of the Tale of a Tub, is evidently taken from this battle of Boileau (Cant. v.) which is excellent in its kind. The fight of the Physicians in the Dispensary, is one of its most shining parts. There is a vast deal of propriety in the weapons Garth has given to his warriors. They are armed, much in character, with caustics, emetics, and cathartics; with buckthorn, and steel-pills; with syringes, bed-pans, and urinals. The execution is exactly proportioned to the deadliness of such irresistible weapons; and the wounds inflicted, are suitable to the nature of each different instrument said to inflict them. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 89. (*The same, his ancient personage to deck,*] In imitation of the progress of Agamemnon's sceptre in Homer, Il. ii. *P.*

Restore the Lock! she cries; and all around
Restore the Lock! the vaulted roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roar'd for the handkerchief that caus'd his pain.
But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
The Lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:

NOTES.

Ver. 105. *fierce Othello*] Rhymer, with a tasteless insensibility, laughed at the incident of losing the handkerchief, as trifling. Neither he, nor the Spectator, seem to have known, that this incident, so beautifully natural, is in the Italian novel, which Shakespeare copied. *Warton.*

Ver. 109. *obtain'd with guilt.*] We are now arrived at the grand catastrophe of the poem; the invaluable Lock which is so eagerly sought, is irrecoverably lost! And here our Poet has made a judicious use of that celebrated fiction of Ariosto; that all things lost on earth, are treasured in the moon. How such a fiction can properly have place in an epic poem, it becomes the defenders of this agreeably extravagant writer to justify; but in a comic poem, it appears with grace and consistency. The whole passage in Ariosto is full of wit and satire; for wit and satire were, perhaps, among the chief and characteristical excellencies of this incomparable Italian.

In this repository in the lunar sphere, says the sprightly Italian, were to be found,

" Cio che in somma quà giù perdesti mai,
Là su saltendo ritrovar potrai."

It is very remarkable, that the Poet had the boldness to place among these imaginary treasures, the famous deed of Constantine to Pope Silvester, "if (says he) I may be allowed to say this,"

" Questo era il dono (se pero dir lece)
Che Constantino al buon Silvestro fece."

It may be observed in general, to the honour of the poets, both ancient and modern, that they have ever been some of the first, who have detected and opposed the false claims and mischievous *usurpations* of superstition and slavery. Nor can this be wondered

With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So heav'n decrees! with heav'n who can contest?
Some thought it mounted to the Lunar sphere,
Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd there.
There Heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous vases,
And Beaux in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.
There broken vows, and death-bed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick men's pray'rs,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dry'd butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.
But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,
Tho' mark'd by none but quick, poetic eyes:
(So Rome's great founder to the heav'ns withdrew,
To Proculus alone confess'd in view)
A sudden Star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's Locks first rose so bright,
The heav'ns bespangling with dishevell'd light.
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleas'd pursue its progress through the skies.

NOTES.

dered at, since these two are the greatest enemies, not only to all true happiness, but to all true genius. *Warton.*

Ver. 114. *Since all things lost*] Vide Ariosto, Canto xxxiv. *P.*

Ver. 132. *through the skies.*] One cannot sufficiently applaud the

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 131. *The Sylphs behold*] These two lines added, for the same reason, to keep in view the Machinery of the Poem. *P.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 128. " Flammiferumque trahens spatioso limite crinem Stella micat." Ovid. *P.*

This the Beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray;
This the blest Lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.
Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,
Shall draw such envy as the Lock you lost.
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

NOTES.

the art of the Poet, in constantly keeping in the reader's view, the Machinery of the Poem, to the very last: even when the Lock is transform'd, the Sylphs, who had so carefully guarded it, are here once again artfully mentioned, as finally rejoicing in its honourable transformation. *Warton.*

Ver. 137. *This Partridge soon*] John Partridge was a ridiculous Star-gazer, who in his Almanacks every year never failed to predict the downfal of the Pope, and the King of France, then at war with the English. *Warburton.*

Upon the whole, I hope it will not be thought an exaggerated panegyric to say, that the Rape of the Lock is the best Satire extant; that it contains the truest and liveliest picture of modern life; and that the subject is of a more elegant nature, as well as more artfully conducted, than any other heroi-comic poem.

Our nation can boast also, of having produced some other poems of the burlesque kind, that are excellent; particularly the Splendid Shilling, that admirable copy of the solemn irony of Cervantes, who is the father and unrivalled model of the true mock heroic; and the Muscipula, written with the purity of Virgil, whom the author so perfectly understood, and with the pleasantry of Lucian; to which I cannot forbear adding, the Scribleriad of Mr. Cambridge, the Machinæ Gesticulantes of Addison, the Hobbinol of Somerville, and the Trivia of Gay; the Battle of the Wigs of Thornton, and the Triumph of Temper of Hayley.

If some of the most candid among the French critics begin to acknowledge, that they have produced nothing in point of sublimity and majesty equal to the Paradise Lost, we may also venture to affirm, that in point of delicacy, elegance, and fine-turned raillery, on which they have so much valued themselves, they have produced nothing equal to the Rape of the Lock. What comes nearest to it, is the pleasing and elegant Ver-vert of Gresset, in which the foibles of the Nuns are touched with so delicate a hand, and such nice ridicule, that it cannot disgust the most religious prude.

The learned and ingenious Mr. Cambridge has, in the Preface to his Scribleriad, made a remark so new and so solid, as to deserve examination and attention.

He says, that in first reading the four celebrated mock-heroic poems, he perceived they had all some radical defect. That at last he found, by a diligent perusal of Don Quixote, that propriety was the fundamental excellence of that work. That all the marvellous was reconcileable to probability, as the author leads his hero into that species of absurdity only, which it was natural for an imagination, heated with the continual reading of books of chivalry, to fall into. That the want of attention to this was the fundamental error of those poems. For with what propriety do Churchmen, Physicians, Beaux, and Belles, or Booksellers, in the

Lutrin, Dispensary, Rape of the Lock, and Dunciad, address themselves to heathen gods, offer sacrifices, consult oracles, or talk the language of Homer, and of the heroes of antiquity?

This acute observation bears hard on the conduct of more than one of the heroi-comic poems above mentioned.

Nothing is here said of Hudibras; because its unrivalled excellence could not be discussed in a note. It is one of the poems that give peculiar lustre to our nation and language. One circumstance only I will here mention, that the ancients had no notion of such sort of Poems. The cruel wars between Pompey and Cæsar, and the execrable proscriptions of Augustus, were never treated in a burlesque style, as the horrors of the league in France, and the bloody civil war in England, were described in the Satyre Menippée, and in Hudibras. One of the most accurate Greek scholars of our time and nation, is of opinion, that the Batrachomyomachia is not by Homer, but a burlesque poem in imitation of his manner, by some ancient poet, who, though he adopted the words and expressions of the Greek Bard, formed his metre according to the pronunciation of his own country. With equal confidence we may pronounce the Margites to have been a forgery, though there are only four lines of it extant, three of which are quoted by Plato and Aristotle; but in these we have a compound verb, with the augment upon the preposition (ηπιστατο), which Homer's grammar did not admit. Knight's Analytical Essay on the Greek Alphabet, page 30. *Warton.*

Dr. Johnson truly says of the Rape of the Lock, that it is the most airy, the most ingenious, and the most delightful of all Pope's compositions. Indeed, upon this subject there cannot be two opinions; and Dr. Warton has praised it as warmly as Johnson.

This Poem is founded, however, upon *local manners*. And of all Poems of that kind it is undoubtedly far the best; whether we consider the exquisite tone of raillery, a certain musical sweetness and *suitableness* in the versification, the management of the story, or the kind of fancy and airiness given to the whole: but what entitles it to its high claim of peculiar poetic excellences?—the powers of imagination and the felicity of invention displayed, in adopting and most artfully conducting a *machinery*, so fanciful, so appropriate, so novel, and so poetical. The introduction of Discord, &c. as machinery in the Lutrin, &c. is not to be mentioned

at the same time. Such a being as Discord, will suit a hundred subjects; but the elegant, the airy Sylph,

Loose to the wind, whose airy garments flew,
Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes:

such a being as this, is suited alone to the identical and peculiar Poem in which it is employed.

I will now go a step farther in appreciating the elegance and beauty of this Poem; and I would ask the question: "Let any other poet, Dryden, Waller, Cowley, or Gray, *be assigned* this subject, and this *machinery:* could they have produced a work *altogether so correct*, and *beautiful*, from the same given materials?" Let us however still remember, that this Poem is founded on *local manners*, and the employment of the Sylphs is in *artificial life;* for this reason, the Poem must have *a secondary rank*, when considered strictly and truly with regard to its poetry.

Whether Pope would have excelled as much in loftier subjects, of a general nature, in the "high mood" of Lycidas, the rich colourings of Comus, and the magnificent descriptions and sublime images of Paradise Lost; or in painting the characters and employments of aërial beings,

That tread the ooze of the salt deep,
Or run upon the sharp wind of the north;

is another question. He has not attempted it: *I have no doubt he would have failed.* But to have produced a Poem, infinitely the highest of its kind, and which no other Poet could perhaps altogether have done so well, is surely very high praise. The excellence is Pope's own, the inferiority is in the subject; no one understood better that excellent rule of Horace:

Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis æquam
Viribus. *Bowles.*

In the foregoing observations, Mr. Bowles has again attempted to inforce his opinion, that there are in poetry certain subjects which have a relative rank to each other, and that as the Rape of the Lock is founded on what he calls *local manners*, and *artificial life*, it is only entitled to a secondary station. It is also inferred, that if Pope had attempted *loftier subjects*, he *would have failed*, and consequently, that notwithstanding the admitted excellence of the foregoing poem, he was only a *secondary poet*.

From this it would follow, that the rank which a poet is entitled to hold must be determined by the *subject* on which he treats, and not by the *genius* which he displays; and that a poet may be intitled to a *first*, a *second*, or a *third* rank, according to the subject he adopts.—Thus Homer was a poet of the first rank when he wrote the Iliad, and of the second rank when he wrote his Odyssey, which is founded on *local manners* and *artificial life*. In like manner Mr. Bowles informs us, that Pope, "in his Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard," appears "on the high ground of the poet of nature," and that "nothing of the kind has ever been produced equal to it for pathos, painting, and melody;" that in another of his pieces he is "equal to Shakespeare,"—"yet," says he, "in speaking of the *poetical subject* and the *powers of execution*, with regard to the first, Pope cannot be classed amongst the *highest order of Poets*, with regard to the second, *none ever was his superior*."

If then Pope is to be degraded to a secondary rank, let it be understood, that it is not because he has been found unequal to *any subject* which he has attempted, from the sublime strains of the Messiah, and the deep pathos of the Epistle of Eloisa, to the keen satire of the Dunciad, or the sportive pages of the Rape of the Lock; but because he has not undertaken some work of *a higher order of poetry!*—as if any works could be of a higher order, than those which announce the awful predictions of futurity, and the sacred mysteries of religion; which awaken the tenderest sympathies of the human bosom; which embody and bring before us the liveliest pictures and most faithful representations of real life; which correct and discountenance vice and folly by the just severity of satire; or which instruct and mend the heart by lessons of wisdom, morality, and truth.

ELEGY

TO THE MEMORY OF

AN UNFORTUNATE LADY.

The illiberal and unfeeling style in which Johnson has so frequently indulged, in his Life of Pope, is strikingly exemplified in the manner in which he has treated the subject of these verses. Without affording us any information as to the real facts, he supposes that the Lady was "impatient, violent, and ungovernable;" that "her desires were too hot for delay, and that she liked self-murder better than suspense;" to which he adds, that "poetry has not often been worse employ'd, than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl!"

Such are the criticisms to which this poem has given rise—a piece which, although produced at an early age, is not exceeded in pathos and true poetry by any production of its author. But whilst we admit the extraordinary powers displayed by the Poet, we cannot but perceive that they are apparently employed to give a sanction to an act of criminality, and to inculcate principles which cannot be too cautiously guarded against. It must, however, be observed, that this piece is not to be judged of by the common rules of criticism. It is, in fact, a spontaneous burst of indignation against the authors of the calamity which it records. Throughout the whole poem, the author speaks as if he were under a delusion, and utters sentiments which would be wholly unpardonable at other times. It is only in this light that we can excuse the violence of many of the expressions, which border on the very verge of impiety. The first line of the poem demonstrates that he is no longer under the control of reason. He sees the ghost of the person whom he so highly admired and loved. The "visionary sword" gleams before his eyes, and in the excess of his grief he perceives nothing but what is great and noble in the act that terminated her life. This impassioned strain is continued till his anger is turned against the author of her sufferings, when it is poured out in one of the most terrific passages which poetry, either ancient or modern, can exhibit; a passage in which indignation and revenge seem to absorb every other feeling, and to involve not only the offender, but all who are connected with him, in indiscriminate destruction. Nor is this sufficient—their destruction must be the cause of exultation to others, and they are to become the objects of insult and abhorrence—

"There passengers shall stand, and pointing say, &c."

Compassion at length succeeds to resentment, and pity to terror. The poet in some degree assumes his own character, and his feelings are expressed in language of the deepest affection and tenderness, which impresses itself indelibly on the memory of the reader.

The concluding lines, whilst they display the ardour of real passion, demonstrate how greatly the author was attached to the art he professed;—*that*, and his affection for the object of his grief, could only expire together;

" The *Muse* forgot and thou belov'd no more."

ELEGY

TO THE MEMORY OF

AN UNFORTUNATE LADY.*

WHAT beck'ning ghost, along the moon-light shade
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gor'd?
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?

NOTES.

* See the Duke of Buckingham's Verses to a Lady designing to retire into a Monastery, compared with Mr. Pope's Letters to several Ladies, p. 206, quarto Edition. She seems to be the same person whose unfortunate death is the subject of this poem. *P.*

Ver. 1. *What beck'ning ghost,*]

"What gentle ghost besprent with April dew,
Hails me so solemnly to yonder yew?
And beck'ning wooes me?" Ben Jonson.

The cruelties of her relations, the desolation of the family, the being deprived of the rites of sepulture, the circumstance of dying in a country remote from her relations, are all touched with great tenderness and pathos, particularly the four lines from the 51st:

By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd;

Which lines may remind one of that exquisite stroke in the Philoctetes of Sophocles, who, among other afflicting circumstances, had not near him any σύνδρομον ὄμμα. ver. 171. The true cause of the excellence of this Elegy is, that the occasion of it was real; so true is the maxim, that nature is more powerful than fancy; and that we can always feel more than we can imagine; and that

 the

Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,
Is it, in heav'n, a crime to love too well?
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,
To act a Lover's or a Roman's part?
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?
  Why bade ye else, ye Pow'rs! her soul aspire
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?
Ambition first sprung from your blest abodes;
The glorious fault of Angels and of Gods:
Thence to their images on earth it flows,
And in the breasts of Kings and Heroes glows.
Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
Dull sullen pris'ners in the body's cage:
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;
Like Eastern Kings a lazy state they keep,
And, close confin'd to their own palace, sleep.

NOTES.

the most artful fiction must give way to truth; for this Lady was beloved by Pope. After many and wide inquiries, I have been informed that her name was Wainsbury; and that (which is a singular circumstance) she was as ill-shaped and deformed as our author. Her death was not by a sword, but, what would less bear to be told poetically, *she hanged herself.* Johnson has too severely censured this Elegy, when he says, "that it has drawn much attention by the illaudable singularity, of treating suicide with respect;" and that "poetry has not often been worse employed, than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl." She seems to have been driven to this desperate act by the violence and cruelty of her uncle and guardian, who forced her to a convent abroad; and to which circumstance Pope alludes in one of his Letters.

Warton.

From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)
Fate snatch'd her early to the pitying sky.
As into air the purer spirits flow,
And sep'rate from their kindred dregs below;
So flew the soul to its congenial place,
Nor left one virtue to redeem her Race.

But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death;
Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.
Thus, if eternal justice rules the ball,
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall:
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates;
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say,
(While the long funerals blacken all the way)
Lo! these were they, whose souls the Furies steel'd,
And curs'd with hearts unknowing how to yield.
Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learn'd to glow
For others good, or melt at others woe.

What can atone, oh ever-injur'd shade!
Thy fate unpity'd, and thy rites unpaid?
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear
Pleas'd thy pale ghost, or grac'd thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd,

By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd!
What though no friends in sable weeds appear,
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show?
What though no weeping Loves thy ashes grace,
Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face;
What though no sacred earth allow thee room,
Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be drest,
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow;

NOTES.

Ver. 59. *What tho' no weeping Loves, &c.*] This beautiful little Elegy had gained the unanimous admiration of all men of taste. When a Critic comes—But hold; to give his observation fair play, let us first analyze the Poem. The Ghost of the injured person appears, to excite the Poet to revenge her wrongs. He describes her character—execrates the author of her misfortunes—expatiates on the severity of her fate—the rites of sepulture denied her in a foreign land: Then follows,

" What tho' no weeping Loves thy ashes grace," &c.
" Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be drest," &c.

Can any thing be more naturally pathetic? Yet the Critic tells us, he can give no quarter to this part of the poem, which is eminently, he says, discordant with the subject, and not the language of the heart. But when he tells us, that it is to be ascribed to imitation, copying indiscreetly what has been said by others, [Elements of Crit. vol. ii. p. 182.] his Criticism begins to smell furiously of old John Dennis. Well might our Poet's last wish be, " to commit his writings to the candour of a sensible and reflecting judge, rather than to the malice of every short-sighted and malevolent critic." *Warburton.*

While Angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made.
So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.
How lov'd, how honour'd once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!
Poets themselves must fall like those they sung,
Deaf the prais'd ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.
Ev'n he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the gen'rous tear he pays;
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou belov'd no more!

NOTES.

Ver. 82. *The Muse forgot,*] Of the powerful effect which this poem is calculated to produce, an instance is given in a letter from David Hume to Mr. Spence: "I repeated to him (Mr. Blacklock the poet, who was blind) Mr. Pope's *Elegy to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady*, which I happened to have by heart. And although I be a very bad reciter, I saw it affected him extremely. His eyes, indeed, the great index of the mind, could express no passion, *but his whole body was thrown into agitation.* That poem was equally qualified to touch the delicacy of his taste, and the tenderness of his feelings."—*Spence's Anec.* 448. *Singer's Ed.*

ODE

ON ST. CECILIA'S DAY,

AND

OTHER PIECES FOR MUSIC.

If we cast a transient view over the most celebrated of the modern lyrics, we may observe, that the stanza of Petrarch, which has been adopted by all his successors, displeases the ear, by its tedious uniformity, and by the number of identical cadences. And, indeed, to speak truth, there appears to be little valuable in Petrarch, except the purity of his diction. His sentiments, even of love, are metaphysical and far-fetched. Neither is there much variety in his subjects, or fancy in his method of treating them. Fulvio Testi, Chiabrera, and Metastasio, are much better lyric poets. When Boileau attempted an ode, he exhibited a glaring proof of what will frequently be hinted in the course of these notes, that the writer, whose grand characteristical talent is satiric or moral poetry, will never succeed, with equal merit, in the higher branches of his art. In his ode on the taking of Namur, are instances of the bombastic, of the prosaic, and of the puerile; and it is no small confirmation of the ruling passion of this author, that he could not conclude his ode, but with a severe stroke on his old antagonist Perrault, though the majesty of this species of composition is so much injured by descending to personal satire.

" We have had (says Mr. Gray) in our language, no other odes of the sublime kind, than that of Dryden on St. Cecilia's Day: for Cowley, who had his merit, yet wanted judgment, style, and harmony, for such a task. That of Pope is not worthy of so great a master. Mr. Mason, indeed of late days, has touched the true chords, and with a masterly hand, in some of his choruses; above all in the last of Caractacus;

" Hark! heard ye not yon footstep dread?" &c.

Gray's Works, 4to. page 25.

Warton.

The foregoing observations on the character of Petrarch, as a Lyric Poet, will scarcely obtain the assent of the admirers of Italian poetry; who will be shocked by the assertions, that his stanza *displeases the ear*, and that there *is not much variety* in his subjects, or *fancy* in his manner of treating them. Such observations are sufficiently answered by the celebrity which still attends his writings, and by the avidity and pleasure with which they continue to be read; and which is now extended to the English reader, by the correctly beautiful translations of Lady Dacre, published by Sig. Ugo Foscolo, in his very judicious and entertaining " Essays on Petrarch." Still more hazardous is the assertion, that Chiabrera, Fulvio Testi, and Metastasio, are better Lyric poets than Petrarch.

That the two former are brilliant and spirited writers may be allowed; but to prefer their extravagant figures, eccentric ideas, and impetuous flow of language, to the sustained dignity and purity of style of Petrarch, is, to say the least, not quite consistent with the good taste displayed by Dr. Warton on other occasions. If, instead of those examples, he had referred to their followers, Guidi, Filicaja and the other eminent Italian poets at the close of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century, who have purified the manner, and chastened the style of their immediate predecessors, he would perhaps have had better grounds for his opinion; but not sufficient to dethrone the prince of Italian Lyric poets, from his supreme dominion.

Dr. Warton has also attempted to inforce an opinion, that "the writer whose grand characteristical talent is satiric, or moral poetry, will never succeed, with equal merit, in the *higher branches* of his art." If, by higher branches of his art, he meant Lyric Poetry, it is difficult to say upon what principle such preference is founded, or why the dignity and importance of many other departments of poetry should not intitle them to an equal rank. But, dismissing this point, on which enough has before been said, the assertion of Dr. Warton is not founded on experience. Horace was a moral and satiric, and at the same time a lyric poet; and although it has not perhaps been decided in which of these departments he excelled, yet it never was supposed that his excellence in one, defeated his claims in the other. The works of Ariosto, Epic, Lyric, and Satiric, are read with equal pleasure. Benedetto Menzini wrote satires and odes, both of which rank in the highest class. Dryden cultivated various departments with equal success. Gray excelled both in Elegiac and Lyric poetry. In fact, there are but few persons who have greatly distinguished themselves in any one department, without having also displayed their talents in another. If Pope has not succeeded in Lyric poetry as well as in some other respects, it is because he can scarcely be said to have attempted it. Even the very few pieces he has left were written at the solicitation of his friends; the Ode for Music, and the Dying Christian, at the request of Steele, and the two Choruses, at that of the Duke of Buckingham. He was probably also deterred by the preference generally given to Dryden's Ode, of the justice of which he was fully sensible, and was not disposed after his long toil of Homer, to devote himself again to lighter compositions.

ODE FOR MUSIC

ON ST. CECILIA'S DAY.*

I.

DESCEND, ye Nine! descend and sing;
The breathing instruments inspire,
Wake into voice each silent string,
And sweep the sounding lyre!
In a sadly-pleasing strain
Let the warbling lute complain:
Let the loud trumpet sound,
'Till the roofs all around
The shrill echos rebound:
While in more lengthen'd notes and slow,
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.
Hark! the numbers soft and clear
Gently steal upon the ear;

NOTES.

* Our Author, as Mr. Harte told me, frequently and earnestly declared, that if Dryden had finished a translation of the Iliad, he would not have attempted one, after so great a master: he might have said, with even more propriety, I will not write a music ode after Alexander's Feast; which the variety and harmony of its numbers, and the beauty, force, and energy of its images, have conspired to place at the head of modern Lyric compositions. The subject of Dryden's ode is superior to this of Pope's, because the former is historical, and the latter merely mythological. Dryden's is also more perfect in the unity of the action; for Pope's is not the recital of one great action, but a description of many of the adventures of Orpheus. *Warton.*

Now louder, and yet louder rise,
And fill with spreading sounds the skies;
Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,
In broken air, trembling, the wild music floats;
'Till, by degrees, remote and small,
The strains decay,
And melt away,
In a dying, dying fall.

II.

By Music, minds an equal temper know,
Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.
If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,
Music her soft, assuasive voice applies;
Or, when the soul is press'd with cares,
Exalts her in enliv'ning airs.
Warriors she fires with animated sounds;
Pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds:
Melancholy lifts her head,
Morpheus rouses from his bed,
Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,
List'ning Envy drops her snakes;
Intestine War no more our Passions wage,
And giddy Factions hear away their rage.

NOTES.

Ver. 35.] Dr. Greene set this ode to music in 1730, as an exercise for his Doctor's Degree at Cambridge, on which occasion Pope made considerable alterations in it, and added the following stanza in this place:

Amphion thus bade wild dissension cease,
And soften'd mortals learn'd the arts of peace,

Amphion

III.

But when our Country's cause provokes to Arms,
How martial music ev'ry bosom warms!
So when the first bold vessel dar'd the seas,
High on the stern the Thracian rais'd his strain,
While Argo saw her kindred trees
Descend from Pelion to the main.
Transported demi-gods stood round,
And men grew heroes at the sound,
Enflam'd with glory's charms:
Each chief his sev'nfold shield display'd,
And half unsheath'd the shining blade:
And seas, and rocks, and skies rebound
To arms, to arms, to arms!

NOTES.

Amphion taught contending kings,
From various discords, to create
The music of a well-tun'd state;
Nor slack, nor strain the tender strings,
Those useful touches to impart,
That strike the subject's answering heart,
And the soft silent harmony that springs
From sacred union and consent of things.

And he made another alteration, at the same time, in stanza iv. v. 51, and wrote it thus:

Sad Orpheus sought his consort lost;
The adamantine gates were barr'd,
And nought was seen and nought was heard,
Around the dreary coast;
But dreadful gleams, &c. *Warton.*

Ver. 40. *While Argo*] Few images in any poet, ancient or modern, are more striking than that in Apollonius, where he says, that when the Argo was sailing near the coast where the Centaur Chiron dwelt, he came down to the very margin of the sea, bringing his wife, with the young Achilles in her arms, that he might shew the child to his father Peleus, who was on his voyage with the other Argonauts. Apollonius Rhodius, lib. i. v. 558. *Warton.*

IV.

But when, through all th' infernal bounds,
Which flaming Phlegeton surrounds,
  Love, strong as Death, the Poet led
  To the pale nations of the dead,
What sounds were heard,
What scenes appear'd,
  O'er all the dreary coasts!
    Dreadful gleams,
    Dismal screams,
    Fires that glow,
    Shrieks of woe,
    Sullen moans,
    Hollow groans,
  And cries of tortur'd ghosts!
  But, hark! he strikes the golden lyre;
  And see! the tortur'd ghosts respire,
      See, shady forms advance!
  Thy stone, O Sisyphus, stands still,
  Ixion rests upon his wheel,
      And the pale spectres dance;
The Furies sink upon their iron beds,
And snakes uncurl'd hang list'ning round their heads.

NOTES.

Ver. 49. *But when*] See Divine Legation, book ii. sect 1. where Orpheus is considered as a Philosopher, a Legislator, and a Mystagogue. In vol. v. of the Memoirs of Inscriptions, &c. p. 117, is a very curious dissertation upon the Orphic Life, by the Abbé Fraguier. He was the first critic who rightly interpreted the words of Horace, *Cædibus et fœdo victu*, as meaning an abolition of eating human flesh.

Though the Hymns that remain are not the work of the real Orpheus, yet are they extremely ancient, certainly older than the Expedition of Xerxes against Greece. *Warton.*

V.

By the streams that ever flow,
By the fragrant winds that blow
O'er th' Elysian flow'rs;
By those happy souls who dwell
In yellow meads of Asphodel,
Or Amaranthine bow'rs;
By the heroes' armed shades,
Glitt'ring through the gloomy glades;
By the youths that dy'd for love,
Wand'ring in the myrtle grove,
Restore, restore Eurydice to life:
Oh take the husband, or return the wife!

He sung, and hell consented
To hear the Poet's prayer:
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.
Thus song could prevail
O'er death, and o'er hell,

NOTES.

Ver. 77.] These images are picturesque and appropriated, and are such notes as might

Draw iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And make hell grant what love did seek.

Pope, being insensible of the effects of music, inquired of Dr. Arbuthnot, whether Handel really deserved the applause he met with. The Duchess of Queensberry told me, that Gay could play on the flute, and that this enabled him to adapt so happily some airs in the Beggar's Opera. *Warton.*

Ver. 87.] These numbers are of so burlesque, so low, and ridiculous a kind, and have so much the air of a vulgar drinking song,

A conquest how hard and how glorious!
Tho' fate had fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her,
Yet Music and Love were victorious.

VI.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes:
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!
How wilt thou now the fatal sisters move?
No crime was thine, if 'tis no crime to love.
Now under hanging mountains,
Beside the falls of fountains,
Or where Hebrus wanders,
Rolling in meanders,

NOTES.

song, that one is amazed and concerned to find them in a serious ode. Addison thought this measure exactly suited to the comic character of Sir Trusty in his Rosamond; by the introduction of which he has so strangely debased that very elegant opera. It is observable, that this ludicrous measure is used by Dryden, in a song of evil spirits, in the fourth act of the State of Innocence.

Warton.

Ver. 97.] These scenes, in which Orpheus is introduced as making his lamentations, are not so wild, so savage, and dismal, as those mentioned by Virgil; and convey not such images of desolation and deep despair, as the caverns on the banks of Strymon and Tanais, the Hyperborean deserts, and the Riphæan solitudes. And to say of Hebrus, only, that it rolls in meanders, is flat and feeble, and does not heighten the melancholy of the place. He that would have a complete idea of Orpheus's anguish and situation, must look at the exquisite figure of him (now in the possession of Sir Watkin Williams Wynne) painted by Mr. Dance, a work that does honour to the true genius of the artist, and to the age in which it was produced. *Warton.*

All alone,
Unheard, unknown,
He makes his moan;
And calls her ghost,
For ever, ever, ever lost!
Now with Furies surrounded,
Despairing, confounded,
He trembles, he glows,
Amidst Rhodope's snows:
See, wild as the winds, o'er the desert he flies;
Hark! Hæmus resounds with the Bacchanals' cries—
Ah see, he dies!
Yet ev'n in death Eurydice he sung,
Eurydice still trembled on his tongue,
Eurydice the woods,
Eurydice the floods,
Eurydice the rocks, and hollow mountains rung.

VII.

Music the fiercest grief can charm,
And fate's severest rage disarm:
Music can soften pain to ease,
And make despair and madness please:

NOTES.

Ver. 112.] The death is expressed with a brevity and abruptness suitable to the nature of the ode. Instead of *he sung*, Virgil says, *vocabat*, which is more natural and tender, and adds a moving epithet, that he called *miseram* Eurydicen. The repetition of Eurydice in two very short lines hurts the ear, which Virgil escaped by interposing several other words; and the name itself happens not to be harmonious enough to suffer such repetition.
Warton.

Our joys below it can improve,
And antedate the bliss above.
This the divine Cecilia found,
And to her Maker's praise confin'd the sound.
When the full organ joins the tuneful quire,
Th' immortal pow'rs incline their ear;
Borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire,
While solemn airs improve the sacred fire;
And Angels lean from heav'n to hear.
Of Orpheus now no more let Poets tell,
To bright Cecilia greater pow'r is giv'n;
His numbers rais'd a shade from hell,
Her's lift the soul to heav'n.

NOTES.

Ver. 131. It is observable that this ode, as well as that of Dryden, concludes with an epigram of four lines; a species of witty writing as flagrantly unsuitable to the dignity, and as foreign to the nature of the lyric, as it is of the epic muse.

Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, happening to pay a morning visit to Dryden, whom he always respected, found him in an unusual agitation of spirits, even to a trembling. On inquiring the cause, "I have been up all night (replied the old bard), my musical friends made me promise to write them an ode for their feast of St. Cecilia: I have been so struck with the subject which occurred to me, that I could not leave it till I had completed it: here it is, finished at one sitting." And immediately he showed him this Ode; which places the British lyric poetry above that of any other nation. This anecdote, as true as it is curious, was imparted by Lord Bolingbroke to Pope, by Pope to Mr. Gilbert West, by him to my ingenious friend Mr. Berenger, who communicated it to me. The rapidity, and yet the perspicuity of the thoughts, the glow and the expressiveness of the images, those certain marks of the first sketch of a master, conspire to corroborate the fact. It is not to be understood, that this piece was not afterwards reconsidered, retouched, and corrected. *Warton.*

TWO CHORUSES

TO THE TRAGEDY OF BRUTUS.*

I.

CHORUS OF ATHENIANS.

STROPHE I.

Ye shades, where sacred truth is sought;
Groves, where immortal Sages taught:
Where heav'nly visions Plato fir'd,
And Epicurus lay inspir'd!
In vain your guiltless laurels stood
Unspotted long with human blood.
War, horrid war, your thoughtful Walks invades,
And steel now glitters in the Muses' shades.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Oh heav'n-born sisters! source of art!
Who charm the sense, or mend the heart;

NOTES.

* Altered from Shakespear by the Duke of Buckingham, at whose desire these two Choruses were composed, to supply as many wanting in his play. They were set many years afterward, by the famous Bononcini, and performed at Buckingham-house. *P.*

Ver. 3. *Where heav'nly visions Plato fir'd, And Epicurus lay inspir'd!*] The propriety of these lines arises from hence, that Brutus, one of the Heroes of this play, was of the old Academy; and Cassius, the other, was an Epicurean. *Warburton.*

I cannot be persuaded that Pope thought of Brutus and Cassius, as being followers of different sects of philosophy. *Warton.*

Who lead fair Virtue's train along,
Moral Truth, and mystic Song!
To what new clime, what distant sky,
Forsaken, friendless, shall ye fly?
Say, will ye bless the bleak Atlantic shore?
Or bid the furious Gaul be rude no more?

STROPHE II.

When Athens sinks by fates unjust,
When wild Barbarians spurn her dust;
Perhaps ev'n Britain's utmost shore
Shall cease to blush with strangers' gore,
See Arts her savage sons control,
And Athens rising near the pole!
Till some new Tyrant lifts his purple hand,
And civil madness tears them from the land.

ANTISTROPHE II.

Ye Gods! what justice rules the ball?
Freedom and Arts together fall;

NOTES.

Ver. 12. *Moral Truth and mystic Song!*] The construction is dubious. Does the poet address Moral Truth and Mystic Song, as being the Heaven-born Sisters; or does he address himself to the Muses, mentioned in the preceding line, and so make Moral Truth and Mystic Song to be a part of Virtue's train? as Hesiod begins his poem.

Dr. Warburton's proposed correction is not consistent with either construction, when he says, the poet had expressed himself better had he said Moral Truth in Mystic Song. Moral Truth, a single person, can neither be the Heaven-born Sisters, nor yet, alone, the train of Virtue. If it could, the emendation might have been spared, because this is no uncommon figure in poetry.

Warton.

Ver. 26. *Freedom and Arts*] A sentiment worthy of Alcæus!

Throughout

Fools grant whate'er Ambition craves,
And men, once ignorant, are slaves.
O curs'd effects of civil hate,
In ev'ry age, in ev'ry state!
Still, when the lust of tyrant pow'r succeeds,
Some Athens perishes, some Tully bleeds.

NOTES.

Throughout all his works our author constantly shews himself a true lover of true liberty. *Warton.*

Ver. 32. *Some Athens*]

———When brutal force
Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp
Of guardian power, the majesty of rule,
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
To poor, dishonest pageants!
Pleasures of Imagination, B. ii.

This ode is of the kind which M. D'Alembert, judging like a mathematician, prefers to odes that abound with imagery and figures, namely, what he calls the Didactic ode; and then proceeds to give reasons for preferring Horace to Pindar, as a lyric poet. Marmontel in his Poetics opposes him. *Warton.*

II.

CHORUS OF YOUTHS AND VIRGINS.*

SEMICHORUS.

Oh Tyrant Love! hast thou possest
The prudent, learn'd, and virtuous breast?
Wisdom and wit in vain reclaim,
And Arts but soften us to feel thy flame.
Love, soft intruder, enters here,
But ent'ring learns to be sincere.
Marcus with blushes owns he loves,
And Brutus tenderly reproves.
Why, Virtue, dost thou blame desire,
Which Nature has imprest,
Why, Nature, dost thou soonest fire
The mild and gen'rous breast?

CHORUS.

Love's purer flames the Gods approve;
The Gods and Brutus bend to love:

NOTES.

* Some of Dryden's short lyrical odes and songs are wonderfully harmonious; and not sufficiently noticed; particularly in King Arthur, Act III.

" O Sight! the mother of Desire," &c.

The song also of the Syrens in Act IV: and the Incantations in the Third Act of Œdipus, put in the mouth of Tiresias;

" Chuse the darkest part o' th' grove,
Such as ghosts at noon-day love," &c.

Nor must his first ode for St. Cecilia's Day be forgotten, in which are passages almost equal to any of the second: especially its opening,

Brutus for absent Portia sighs,
And sterner Cassius melts at Junia's eyes.
What is loose love? a transient gust,
Spent in a sudden storm of lust,
A vapour fed from wild desire,
A wand'ring, self-consuming fire.
But Hymen's kinder flames unite,
And burn for ever one;
Chaste as cold Cynthia's virgin light,
Productive as the Sun.

SEMICHORUS.

Oh source of ev'ry social tye,
United wish, and mutual joy!
What various joys on one attend,
As son, as father, brother, husband, friend?
Whether his hoary sire he spies,
While thousand grateful thoughts arise;
Or meets his spouse's fonder eye;
Or views his smiling progeny:
What tender passions take their turns,
What home-felt raptures move!
His heart now melts, now leaps, now burns,
With reverence, hope, and love.

NOTES.

opening, and the second stanza that describes Tubal and his brethren. *Warton.*

Ver. 31. *Or meets*] Recalling to our minds that pathetic stroke in Lucretius;

—— " dulces occurrant oscula nati
Præripere, et tacitâ pectus dulcedine tangunt."
Lib. iii. 909.
Warton.

CHORUS.

Hence guilty joys, distastes, surmises,
Hence false tears, deceits, disguises,
Dangers, doubts, delays, surprises;
Fires that scorch; yet dare not shine.
Purest love's unwasting treasure,
Constant faith, fair hope, long leisure,
Days of ease, and nights of pleasure,
Sacred Hymen! these are thine.*

NOTES.

* These two choruses are enough to shew us his great talents for this species of poetry, and to make us lament he did not prosecute his purpose in executing some plans he had chalked out; but the character of the managers of play-houses at that time, was what (he said) soon determined him to lay aside all thoughts of that nature. *Warburton.*

These choruses are elegant and harmonious; but are they not chargeable with the fault, which Aristotle imputes to many of Euripides, that they are foreign and adventitious to the subject, and contribute nothing towards the advancement of the main action? Whereas the chorus ought,

" Μοριον ειναι τε ὁλε, και συναγωνιζεσθαι."

to be a part or member of the one whole, co-operate with, and help to accelerate the intended event; as is constantly, adds the philosopher, the practice of Sophocles. Whereas these reflections of Pope on the baneful influences of war, on the arts and learning, and on the universal power of love, seem to be too general, are not sufficiently appropriated, do not rise from the subject and occasion, and might be inserted with equal propriety in twenty other tragedies. This remark of Aristotle, though he does not himself produce any examples, may be verified from the following, among many others. In the Phœnicians of Euripides, they sing a long and very beautiful, but ill-placed, hymn to Mars; I speak of that which begins so nobly, ver. 793,

" Ω πολυμοχθος Αρης,"

" O direful Mars! why art thou still delighted with blood and with death, and why an enemy to the feasts of Bacchus?" And a still

more glaring instance may be brought from the end of the third act of the Troades, in which the story of Ganymede is introduced not very artificially. To these may be added that exquisite ode in praise of Apollo, descriptive of his birth and victories, which we find in the Iphigenia in Tauris.

On the other hand, the choruses of Sophocles never desert the subject of each particular drama, and all their sentiments and reflections are drawn from the situation of the principal personage of the fable. Nay, Sophocles hath artfully found a method of making those poetical descriptions, with which the choruses of the ancients abound, carry on the chief design of the piece; and has by these means accomplished what is a great difficulty in writing tragedy, united poetry with propriety.

In the Philoctetes the chorus takes a natural occasion, at verse 694, to give a minute and moving picture of the solitary life of that unfortunate hero; and when afterwards, at verse 855, pain has totally exhausted the strength and spirits of Philoctetes, and it is necessary for the plot of the tragedy that he should fall asleep, it is then that the chorus breaks out into an exquisite ode to Sleep. As in the Antigone, with equal beauty and decorum in an address to the God of Love, at verse 791 of that play. And thus lastly, when the birth of Œdipus is doubtful, and his parents unknown, the chorus suddenly exclaims,

" Τις σε, τεκνοι,"

" From which, O my son, of the immortal gods, didst thou spring? Was it some nymph, a favourite of Pan, that haunts the mountains; or some daughter of Apollo; for this god loves the remote rocks and caverns, who bore you? Or was it Mercury who reigns in Cyllene, or did Bacchus,

" Θεος ναιων επ' ακρων ορεων," ver. 1118.

a god who dwells on the tops of the mountains, beget you, on any of the nymphs that possess Helicon, with whom he frequently sports?"

But what shall we say to the strong objections lately made by some very able and learned critics to the use of the chorus at all? The critics I have in view, are Metastasio, Twining, Pye, Colman, and Johnson; who have brought forward such powerful arguments against this so important a part of the ancient drama, as to shake our conviction of its utility and propriety, founded on what Hurd, Mason, and Brumoy, have so earnestly and elegantly urged on the subject. *Warton.*

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.*

ODE.

I.

VITAL spark of heavenly flame
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame!
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life!

II.

Hark! they whisper; Angels say,
Sister spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight?
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

III.

The world recedes; it disappears;
Heaven opens on my eyes; my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy Victory?
O Death! where is thy Sting?

NOTES.

* This Ode was written in imitation of the famous Sonnet of Hadrian to his departing soul; but as much superior in sense and sublimity to its original, as the Christian religion is to the Pagan.
Warburton.

This Ode was written, we find, at the desire of Steele; and our Poet, in a letter to him on that occasion, says,—"You have it, as Cowley calls it, just warm from the brain; it came to me the first moment I waked this morning; yet you'll see, it was not so absolutely inspiration, but that I had in my head, not only the verses of Hadrian, but the fine fragment of Sappho."

It is possible, however, that our Author might have had another composition in his head, besides those he here refers to: for there is a close and surprising resemblance between this ode of Pope, and one of an obscure and forgotten rhymer of the age of Charles the Second, namely Thomas Flatman; from whose dunghill, as well as from the dregs of Crashawe, of Carew, of Herbert, and others (for it is well known he was a great reader of all those poets), Pope has very judiciously collected gold. And the following stanza is, perhaps, the only valuable one Flatman has produced:

When on my sick bed I languish;
Full of sorrow, full of anguish,
Fainting, gasping, trembling, crying,
Panting, groaning, speechless, dying;
Methinks I hear some gentle spirit say,
Be not fearful, come away!

The third and fourth lines are eminently good and pathetic, and the climax well preserved, the very turn of them is closely copied by Pope; as is likewise the striking circumstance of the dying man's imagining he hears a voice calling him away:

Vital spark of heav'nly flame
Quit, O quit, this mortal frame!
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Hark! they whisper! Angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away! *Warton.*

Prior also translated this little Ode, but with manifest inferiority to Pope. Pope was certainly indebted to Flatman. The plagiarism is *palpable*. Dr. Warton speaks with too much contempt of Crashawe, Herbert, &c. *Some* of Crashawe's strains are of a

" higher mood;" and who can deny great merit to the author of that natural and pleasing effusion, of which Mr. Ellis, in his valuable specimens of English Poetry, has selected,

" I made a Posy, as the day went by."

Herbert was Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and afterwards Rector of Bemerton, near Salisbury. *Bowles.*

ELOISA TO ABELARD.

O Abelard, ill-fated youth!
Thy tale shall justify this truth;
But well I weet, thy cruel wrong,
Adorns a nobler Poet's song:
Dan Pope, for thy misfortune griev'd,
With kind concern and skill has weav'd
A silken web; and ne'er shall fade
Its colours; gently has he laid
The mantle o'er thy sad distress,
And Venus shall the texture bless. *Prior.*

In point of poetical excellence, the Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard has been more applauded than any of the works of Pope. Dr. Warton "conceives it to be the most highly finished, and certainly the most interesting, of the pieces of our author;" and Mr. Bowles declares his conviction, that "it is infinitely superior to every thing of the kind, ancient or modern." This commendation has not however been suffered to pass without deductions of such a nature, as not only detract from its value, but, if justly founded, would render the poem undeserving a place in the works of Pope. "We must candidly own," says Warton, "that the principal circumstance of distress is of so indelicate a nature, that it is with difficulty disguised by the exquisite art and address of the poet." Mr. Bowles has ventured to advance a step further, and to represent the poem as being of an immoral tendency. "The inherent indelicacy of the subject," says he, "is one objection to it; and who but must lament its immoral effect?" On this head it may be observed, that different opinions will be formed, according to the light in which it is viewed, and the different characters of those who decide. Such persons as are susceptible of those impressions which works of genius are intended to communicate, who comprehend the whole of the subject, and can enter into the feelings, and perceive the intentions of the poet or the artist, will view it as a true connoisseur views an ancient statue, and will find no disposition to attend to remarks that can only interfere with or destroy such impressions; whilst they who are disposed to consider a subject in parts, rather than in the whole, and to look for causes of objection, may doubtless discover in the Epistle of Eloisa, passages which will be considered by them as licentious or immoral. It must however be observed, that if this construction be put upon the poem, it is what the author never intended. On the contrary, his object is to shew the fatal consequences of an ungovernable passion; and if he has done this in natural and even glowing language, it must be remembered that such are not his own sentiments, but those of the person he has undertaken to represent, and are in general given in nearly her own words. That many expressions and passages may be pointed out, which are inconsistent with the established order and just regulations of society, may be fully admitted. Such for instance as the lines

> How oft when press'd to marriage have I said,
> Curse on all laws but those which love has made.

But surely it is not likely that such sentiments can impose upon the weakest and most inexperienced minds. It is indeed highly probable that Pope has in some few instances intentionally exaggerated the sentiments and expressions of Eloisa, in order to render it impossible for any person of common capacity to be misled by such statements. Those whose morals are likely to be corrupted by this poem, will have little chance of escaping the much more pernicious productions, as well in prose as in verse, which are daily poured out before the public.

It is remarkable that Dr. Johnson, instead of charging the subject of this poem with either indecency or immorality, has expressly declared it to be his opinion that "it is so judiciously chosen, that it would be difficult, in turning over the annals of the world, to find another, which so many circumstances concur to recommend."

The fact is, that the story of Eloisa exhibits some of the most striking circumstances, and most important lessons that are to be found in the records of mankind. With every endowment of nature, and every accomplishment of education, with a superior understanding, and a deeply sensible and affectionate heart, Eloisa fell a sacrifice to the scholastic pedantry of the age in which she lived, and became the victim of the noblest of feelings—the admiration and love of talents and of virtue. The philosophy of the times was employed to exalt the powers of the intellect only, and the object of her adoration had the abilities of a sage with the feelings of a barbarian. By such an instructor she was seduced, but not degraded. In the conflict that ensued, the virtues of Eloisa overcame the depravity of Abelard. Instead of sinking to his level, she raised him to her own. By her unexampled magnanimity and unalterable affection, she created in him a new heart, and he hastened to obliterate, by every compensation in his power, the injury he had done to her. Their passion was ennobled by every thing that could throw lustre on their domestic life, by a coincidence of temper and disposition—a belief in the same religious tenets, and a union of occupations, studies, and pursuits. The tragical events that afterwards occurred, and which have given celebrity to their mournful story, add to its interest without changing its character. Disciplined by circumstances, and exalted by sufferings, their affections united in the pursuit of higher objects. The pious exertions of Abelard in raising the Paraclete, were seconded by the

devotion of Eloisa, its first Abbess; and after a course of conduct which redeems their errors, they rest together within its walls.

On the monument of Eloisa were inscribed the following rude monkish verses:

Hoc tumulo Abbatissa jacet prudens Heloissa;
Paraclitum statuit, cum Paraclito requiescit.
Gaudia sanctorum sua sunt super alta polorum;
Nos meritis precibusque suis exaltet ab imis.

The Parisian Academy of *Belles Lettres*, in the year 1766, prepared, at the request of Madame de Rochefoucault, the late Abbess of Paraclete, an inscription more worthy of the characters of the persons deposited there; which was afterwards inscribed on a marble tablet, by the directions of her successor, Madame de Roucy.

Hic
sub eodem marmore jacent
Hujus Monasterii
Conditor, Petrus Abelardus,
Et Abbatissa prima Heloisa;
Olim studiis, amore, infaustis nuptiis,
Et penitentiâ,
Nunc eternâ, ut speramus, felicitate
Conjuncti.
Petrus Abelardus obiit vigesimâ primâ
Aprilis, anno 1142.
Heloisa decimâ septimâ Maii, 1163.
Cùris Carolæ de Roucy, Paracleti
Abbatissæ,
1779.

TRANSLATED.

Here,
under the same marble, repose
Peter Abelard, the founder,
And Heloisá, the first Abbess,
of this Monastery;
Once in dispositions, in pursuits,
in love, in unhappy nuptials,
and in repentance;
and now, as we trust,

in eternal happiness,
united.
Peter Abelard died the twenty-first of April, 1142,
And Heloisa the seventeenth of May, 1163.
Erected by Caroline de Roucy,
Abbess of Paraclete,
1779.

ARGUMENT.

ABELARD and Eloisa flourished in the twelfth century; they were two of the most distinguished persons of their age in learning and beauty, but for nothing more famous than for their unfortunate passion. After a long course of calamities, they retired each to a several Convent, and consecrated the remainder of their days to religion. It was many years after this separation, that a letter of Abelard's to a Friend, which contained the history of his misfortune, fell into the hands of Eloisa. This, awakening all her tenderness, occasioned those celebrated letters (out of which the following is partly extracted) which give so lively a picture of the struggles of grace and nature, virtue and passion. *P.*

A Traveller who visited the Convent about the year 1768 (see *Annual Register*) says, that its situation and prospects by no means resemble Pope's beautiful and romantic description of it. Father St. Romain, the officiating Priest, walked with him round the whole demesne. The Abbess, who was in her eighty-second year, desired to see our Traveller, for she said she was his countrywoman, and allied to the extinct families of Lifford and Stafford. She was aunt to the then Duke de Rochefoucault; and being fifth in succession, as Abbess of that Convent, hoped it would become a kind of patrimony. We know, alas! what has since happened both to her Family and her Convent! The community seemed to know but little of the afflicting story of their Founder. Little remains of the original building but a few pointed arches. In examining the tombs of these unfortunate lovers, he observed that Eloisa appeared much taller than Abelard. *Warton.*

ELOISA TO ABELARD.*

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heav'nly-pensive contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing melancholy reigns,
What means this tumult in a Vestal's veins?
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?
Yet, yet I love!—From Abelard it came,
And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.
  Dear fatal name! rest ever unreveal'd,
Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd:
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
Where, mix'd with God's, his lov'd Idea lies:
O write it not, my hand—the name appears
Already written—wash it out, my tears!
In vain lost Eloisa weeps and prays,
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.

NOTES.

* However happy and judicious the subject of this Epistle may be thought to be, as displaying the various conflicts and tumults between duty and pleasure, between penitence and passion, that agitated the mind of Eloisa; yet we must candidly own, that the principal circumstance of distress is of so indelicate a nature, that it is with difficulty disguised by the exquisite art and address of the poet. The capital and unrivalled beauties of the poem arise from the striking images and descriptions of the Convent, and from the sentiments drawn from the mystical books of devotion, particularly Madame Guion and the Archbishop of Cambray. *Warton.*

Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:
Ye rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn;
Ye grots and caverns, shagg'd with horrid thorn!
Shrines! where their vigils pale-ey'd virgins keep,
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!
Tho' cold like you, unmov'd and silent grown,
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.
All is not Heaven's while Abelard has part;
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;
Nor pray'rs nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears, for ages taught to flow in vain.
Soon as thy letters trembling I unclose,
That well-known name awakens all my woes.
Oh name for ever sad! for ever dear!
Still breath'd in sighs, still usher'd with a tear.
I tremble too, where'er my own I find,
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.

NOTES.

Ver. 24. *Forgot myself to stone.*] This is an expression of Milton; as is also, *caverns shagg'd* with *horrid thorn,* and the epithets *pale-ey'd, twilight, low-thoughted care,* and others, are first used in the smaller poems of Milton, which Pope seems to have been just reading.

Some of these circumstances, in the scenery view of the monastery, have perhaps a little impropriety, when introduced into a place so lately founded as was the Paraclete; but are so well imagined, and so highly painted, that they demand excuse.

Warton.

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 24.] "Forgot myself to marble." Milton.

Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,
Led through a sad variety of woe:
Now warm in love, now with'ring in my bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!
There stern Religion quench'd th' unwilling flame,
There died the best of passions, Love and Fame.
  Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.
Nor foes nor fortune take this pow'r away;
And is my Abelard less kind than they?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare;
Love but demands what else were shed in pray'r;
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;
To read and weep is all they now can do.
  Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief.
Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid;

NOTES.

Ver. 41. *Yet write,*] This is taken from the Latin letters that passed betwixt Eloisa and Abelard, and which had been a few years before published in London by Rawlinson, and which our poet has copied and translated in many other passages: Per ipsum Christum obsecramus, quatenus ancillulas ipsius et tuas, crebris literis de his, in quibus adhuc fluctuas, naufragiis certificare digneris, ut nos saltem quæ tibi soli remansimus, doloris vel gaudii participes habeas.—Epist. Heloissæ, p. 46. From the same, also, the use of letters, ver. 51, is taken and amplified; and it is a little remarkable that this use of letters is in the fourth book of Diodorus Siculus.
Warton.

Ver. 51. *Heav'n first taught letters, &c.*] Enlarged from the first epistle of Eloisa to Abelard. "Si imagines nobis amicorum absentium jucundæ sunt, quæ memoriam renovant, et desiderium absentiæ

They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,
When Love approach'd me under friendship's name;
My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,
Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.
Those smiling eyes, attemp'ring ev'ry ray,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day,

NOTES.

absentiæ falso atque inani solatio levant; quanto jucundiores sunt literæ, quæ amici absentis veras notas afferunt! Deo autem gratias, quod hoc saltem modo præsentiam tuam nobis reddere nullâ invidiâ prohiberis, nullâ difficultate præpediris; nullâ (obsecro) negligentiâ retarderis."

Ver. 63. *Those smiling eyes,*] Abelard was reputed the most handsome, as well as the most learned man of his time, according to the kind of learning then in vogue. An old chronicle, quoted by Andrew du Chesne, informs us, that scholars flocked to his lectures from all quarters of the Latin world; and his cotemporary, St. Bernard, relates, that he numbered many principal ecclesiastics and cardinals of the court of Rome.—Abelard himself boasts, that when he retired into the country, he was followed by such immense crowds of scholars, that they could get neither lodgings nor provisions sufficient for them: "Ut nec locus hospitiis, nec terra sufficeret alimentis." (Abelardi Opera, p. 19.) He met with the fate of many learned men, to be embroiled in controversy and accused of heresy; for St. Bernard, whose influence and authority were very great, got his opinion of the Trinity condemned, at a council held at Sens, 1140. But the talents of Abelard were not

Guiltless I gaz'd; heav'n listen'd while you sung;
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.
From lips like those, what precept fail'd to move?
Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love:

NOTES.

not confined to theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, and the thorny paths of scholasticism; he gave proofs of a lively genius by many poetical performances, insomuch that he was reputed to be the author of the famous Romance of the Rose; which, however, was indisputably written by John of Meun, a little city on the banks of the Loire, about four leagues from Orleans; which gave occasion to Marot to exclaim, De Jean de Meun s'enfle le cours de Loire. It was he who continued and finished the Romance of the Rose, which William de Loris had left imperfect forty years before. If chronology did not absolutely contradict the notion of Abelard's being the author of this very celebrated piece, yet are there internal arguments sufficient to confute it. The mistake seems to have flowed from his having given Eloisa the name of Rose, in one of the many sonnets he addressed to her. In this romance there are many severe and satirical strokes on the character of Eloisa, which the pen of Abelard never would have given. In one passage she is introduced speaking with indecency and obscenity; in another, all the vices and bad qualities of women are represented as assembled together in her alone:

Qui les mœurs féminins savoit,
Car tres-tous en soi les avoit.

In a very old Epistle-dedicatory, addressed to Philip the Fourth of France, by this same John of Meun, and prefixed to a French translation of Boetius, a very popular book at that time, it appears, that he also translated the Epistles of Abelard to Heloisa, which were in high vogue at the court. He mentions also, that he had translated Vegetius on the Art Military, and a book called the Wonders of Ireland. These works shew us the taste of the age. His words are: " T'envoye ores Boece de Consolation, que j'ai translaté en François, jaçoit que bien entendes le Latin."

It is to be regretted that we have no exact picture of the person and beauty of Eloisa. Abelard himself says that she was " Facie non infima." Her extraordinary learning, many circumstances con-

cur

Back, through the paths of pleasing sense I ran,
Nor wish'd an Angel whom I lov'd a Man.
Dim and remote the joys of saints I see:
Nor envy them that heav'n I lose for thee.

How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I said,
Curse on all laws but those which love has made?
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.

NOTES.

cur to confirm; particularly one, which is, that the Nuns of the Paraclete are wont to have the office of Whitsunday read to them in Greek, to perpetuate the memory of her understanding that language. The curious may not be displeased to be informed, that the Paraclete was built in the parish of Quincey, upon the little river of Arduzon, near Nogent, upon the Seine. A lady, learned as was Eloisa in that age, who indisputably understood the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew tongues, was a kind of prodigy. Her literature, says Abelard, "in toto regno nominatissimam fecerat;" and, we may be sure, more thoroughly attached him to her. Bussy Rabutin speaks in high terms of commendation of the purity of Eloisa's Latinity; a judgment worthy a French Count! There is a force, but not an elegance, in her style, which is blemished, as might be expected, by many phrases unknown to the pure ages of the Roman language, and by many Hebraisms, borrowed from the translation of the Bible. *Warton.*

Ver. 73. *How oft,*] These extraordinary sentiments are plainly from the Letters: Nihil unquam, Deus scit, in te, nisi te requisivi; te purè, non tua concupiscens. Non matrimonii fœdera, non dotes aliquas expectavi. Et si uxoris nomen sanctius videtur, dulcius mihi semper extitit amicæ vocabulum, aut, si non indigneris, concubinæ vel scorti. Pope has added an injudicious thought about Cupid; mythology is here much out of its place. *Warton.*

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 74. "And own no laws but those which love ordains."
Dryden, Cinyras and Myrrha.

Ver 75. "Love will not be confin'd by Maisterie:
"When

Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,
August her deed, and sacred be her fame;
Before true passion all those views remove;
Fame, wealth, and honour! what are you to Love?
The jealous God, when we profane his fires,
Those restless passions in revenge inspires,
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn them all;
Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;
No, make me mistress to the man I love;
If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee.
Oh! happy state! when souls each other draw,
When love is liberty, and nature, law:
All then is full, possessing and possest,
No craving void left aching in the breast:
Ev'n thought meets thought, ere from the lips it part,
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.

NOTES.

Ver. 88. *No, make me mistress to the man I love;*] "Deum testem invoco, si me Augustus, universo præsidens mundo, matrimonii honore dignaretur, totumque mihi orbem confirmaret in perpetuo præsidendum, charius mihi, et dignius videretur tua dici meretrix, quam illius imperatrix."—Hel. Abelardo, Ep. i.

IMITATIONS.

"When Maisterie comes, the Lord of Love anon
"Flutters his wings, and forthwith is he gone."
Chaucer. *P.*

This sure is bliss, if bliss on earth there be,
And once the lot of Abelard and me.
Alas, how chang'd! what sudden horrors rise!
A naked Lover bound and bleeding lies!
Where, where was Eloise? her voice, her hand,
Her poniard had oppos'd the dire command.
Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain;
The crime was common, common be the pain.
I can no more; by shame, by rage suppress'd,
Let tears, and burning blushes speak the rest.
Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?
As with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil,
The shrines all trembled, and the lamps grew pale:
Heav'n scarce believ'd the conquest it survey'd,
And Saints with wonder heard the vows I made.
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,
Not on the Cross my eyes were fix'd, but you;
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call,
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.

NOTES.

Ver. 108. *Yon altar's*] The altar of Paraclete, says Mr. Berrington, did not then exist; they were not professed at the same time or place; one was at Argenteuil, the other at St. Denys. *Warton.*

Ver. 111. *As with cold lips*] This description of the solemnity of her taking the veil, the prognostics that attended it, her passion intruding itself in the midst of her devotion, Ver. 115; the sudden check to her passion, Ver. 125; need not be pointed out to any reader of sensibility, and lover of true poetry. *Warton.*

Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my woe;
Those still at least are left thee to bestow.
Still on that breast enamour'd let me lie,
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd;
Give all thou canst—and let me dream the rest.
Ah no! instruct me other joys to prize,
With other beauties charm my partial eyes,
Full in my view set all the bright abode,
And make my soul quit Abelard for God.
Ah, think at least thy flock deserves thy care,
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy pray'r;
From the false world in early youth they fled,
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.
You rais'd these hallow'd walls; the desert smil'd,
And Paradise was open'd in the Wild.

NOTES.

Ver 119. *Come! with thy looks, &c.*] These lines cannot be justified by any thing in the letters of Eloisa. What approaches the nearest to them is a passage in the first Epistle, which is thus given in Mr. Berrington's translation. "I am not to have the happiness of your company; give me therefore what else you can. I ask but a few lines; and can you, who are so rich in words, refuse me that faint image of yourself?" The original affords still less grounds for the passage in the poem. "Attende, obsecro, quæ requiro; et parva hæc videbuntur, et tibi facillima. Dum tui præsentia fraudor, verborum saltem votis, quorum tibi copia est, tuæ mihi imaginis præsenta dulcedinem. Frustrà te in rebus dapsilem expecto, si in verbis avarum sustineo."

Ver. 130. *Ah think at least, &c.*] "Hujus quippe loci tu, post Deum, solus es fundator, solus hujus oratorii constructor, solus hujus Congregationis ædificator—in ipsis cubilibus ferarum, in ipsis latibulis latronum, ubi nec nominari Deus solet! divinum erexisti Tabernaculum, &c.—Heloisa Abelardo. Ep. I.

Ver. 133. *You rais'd these hallow'd walls;*] He founded the Monastery. *P.*

No weeping orphan saw his father's stores
Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors;
No silver saints, by dying misers giv'n,
Here brib'd the rage of ill-requited heav'n:
But such plain roofs as piety could raise,
And only vocal with the Maker's praise.
In these lone walls (their days' eternal bound)
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,
Where awful arches make a noon-day night,
And the dim windows shed a solemn light;

NOTES.

Ver. 136. *Our shrines irradiate,*] Non magis auro fulgentia atque ebore, simulacra, quàm lucos, et in iis silentia ipsa adoramus, says Pliny very finely, of places of worship. *Warton.*

Ver. 141. *In these lone*] All the images drawn from the Convent, from this line down to line 170, and particularly the personification of Melancholy, expanding her dreadful wings over its whole circuit, cannot be sufficiently applauded. The fine epithet, *browner horror,* is from Dryden. It is amusing to read with this passage Mr. Gray's excellent Account of his Visit to the Grande Chartreuse. Works, 4to. p. 67.

These exquisite lines will be highly relished by all those,

——— Who never fail
To walk the studious cloysters pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antic pillars massy-proof;
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light;
There let the pealing organ blow
In the full-voic'd quire below;
In service high and anthem clear,
As may with sweetness through mine ear
Dissolve me into extasies,
And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.

Il Penseroso, v. 155.
Warton.

Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray,
And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day.
But now no face divine contentment wears,
'Tis all blank sadness, or continual tears.
See how the force of others' pray'rs I try,
O pious fraud of am'rous charity!
But why should I on others' pray'rs depend?
Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend!
Ah, let thy handmaid, sister, daughter, move,
And all those tender names in one, thy love!
The darksome pines that, o'er yon rocks reclin'd,
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,
The wand'ring streams that shine between the hills,
The grots that echo to the tinkling rills,
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze;
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid.
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long sounding isles, and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose:
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green,
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.
  Yet here for ever, ever must I stay;
Sad proof how well a lover can obey!
Death, only death, can break the lasting chain;
And here, ev'n then, shall my cold dust remain;

Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,
And wait till 'tis no sin to mix with thine.
Ah wretch! believ'd the spouse of God in vain,
Confess'd within the slave of love and man.
Assist me, heav'n! but whence arose that pray'r?
Sprung it from piety, or from despair?
Ev'n here, where frozen chastity retires,
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;
I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;
I view my crime, but kindle at the view,
Repent old pleasures, and solicit new;
Now turn'd to heav'n, I weep my past offence,
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.
Of all affliction taught a lover yet,
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget!
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence?
How the dear object from the crime remove,
Or how distinguish penitence from love?
Unequal task! a passion to resign,
For hearts so touch'd, so pierc'd, so lost as mine.
Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,
How often must it love, how often hate!
How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
Conceal, disdain,—do all things but forget.
But let heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd;
Not touch'd, but rapt; not waken'd, but inspir'd!

NOTES.

Ver. 177. *Ah wretch!*] From the Letters; as also v. 133; and also v. 251; from the Letters. Epist. ii. p. 67. *Warton.*

Ver. 201. *But let heav'n seize it,*] Here is the true doctrine of the

Oh come! oh teach me nature to subdue,
Renounce my love, my life, myself—and you.
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.

How happy is the blameless Vestal's lot!
The world forgetting, by the world forgot:
Eternal sun-shine of the spotless mind!
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd;
Labour and rest, that equal periods keep;
"Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;"
Desires compos'd, affections ever even;
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.
Grace shines around her, with serenest beams,
And whisp'ring Angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her, th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of Seraphs shed divine perfumes,

NOTES.

the Mystics. There are many such strains in Crashaw, particularly in a poem called The Flaming Heart, and in the Seraphical Saint Teresa in Crashaw. *Warton.*

But how beautiful an use has Pope here made of this doctrine! At the same time, nothing is introduced that here offends our serious ideas. *Bowles.*

Ver. 212. *Obedient slumbers,* &c.] Taken from Crashaw. *P.*

Milton also honoured Crashaw by borrowing some lines from his translation of Marino's Slaughter of the Innocents. See Crashaw, in the Letters, vol. vii. *Warton.*

Ver. 215. *Grace shines around her.*] Dr. Warton, in a note on this passage, has given a long extract on Divine Grace, from the works of Fenelon; a writer of the purest mind and warmest devotional feelings, but surely not to be confounded with such persons as talk of "whispering angels," and "wings of seraphs, that shed divine perfumes;" and consequently not much honoured by being placed in such company.

Ver. 218. *Wings of Seraphs*] A late poet, (T. Warton,) speaking of a Hermit at his evening prayers, says beautifully:

Then,

For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,
For her white virgins Hymeneals sing,
To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day.
Far other dreams my erring soul employ,
Far other raptures, of unholy joy:
When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,
Fancy restores what vengeance snatch'd away,
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee.
Oh curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night!
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!
Provoking Demons all restraint remove,
And stir within me every source of love.
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.
I wake:—no more I hear, no more I view,
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.
I call aloud; it hears not what I say:
I stretch my empty arms; it glides away.
To dream once more I close my willing eyes;
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise;

NOTES.

Then, as my taper waxes dim,
Chant ere I sleep my measur'd hymn;
And, at the close, the gleams behold,
Of parting wings bedropt with gold. *Warton.*

Ver. 219. *For her*] Copied exactly from the opinions and ideas of the Mystics and Quietists. There were but six Vestal Virgins at Rome; and it was with great difficulty the number was kept up, from the dread of the punishment for violating the vow, which was to be interred alive. *Warton.*

Alas, no more! methinks we wand'ring go
Through dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,
Where round some mould'ring tow'r pale ivy creeps,
And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies;
Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.
I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,
And wake to all the griefs I left behind.
For thee the fates, severely kind, ordain
A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain;
Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose;
No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows.
Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,
Or moving spirit bade the waters flow;
Soft as the slumbers of a saint forgiv'n,
And mild as op'ning gleams of promis'd heav'n.
Come, Abelard! for what hast thou to dread?
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
Nature stands check'd; Religion disapproves;
Ev'n thou art cold—yet Eloisa loves.
Ah hopeless, lasting flames; like those that burn
To light the dead, and warm th' unfruitful urn.
What scenes appear where'er I turn my view?
The dear Ideas, where I fly, pursue,

NOTES.

Ver. 241. *Methinks we wand'ring*] I have been sometimes inclined to think, that some vision more appropriated, and drawn from her peculiar distress, would have been more striking. Virgil adds to Dido's dream a circumstance beautifully drawn from her own story:

And seeks her Tyrians o'er the waste in vain. *Warton.*

Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,
Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes.
I waste the matin lamp in sighs for thee,
Thy image steals between my God and me,
Thy voice I seem in ev'ry hymn to hear,
With ev'ry bead I drop too soft a tear.
When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight;
In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,
While Altars blaze, and Angels tremble round.
  While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,
Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,
While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,
And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul:
Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!
Oppose thyself to heav'n; dispute my heart:
Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes
Blot out each bright Idea of the skies;
Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears;
Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs;

NOTES.

Ver. 274. *Priests, tapers, temples,*] Equal to any part of Sappho's Ode, so celebrated by Longinus for an assemblage of striking circumstances. *Warton.*

PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Ver. 274. *Priests, tapers, &c.*]

"Priests, tapers, temples, swam before my sight,
Altars, and victims ———"

Smith's Phædra and Hippolitus. *Bowles.*

Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode;
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!
No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole;
Rise alps between us! and whole oceans roll!
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
Fair eyes, and tempting looks, (which yet I view!)
Long lov'd, ador'd ideas, all adieu!
Oh Grace serene! oh virtue heav'nly fair!
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care!
Fresh-blooming hope, gay daughter of the sky!
And Faith, our early immortality!
Enter, each mild, each amicable guest:
Receive, and wrap me in eternal rest!
  See in her cell sad Eloisa spread,
Propt on some tomb, a neighbour of the dead.
In each low wind methinks a Spirit calls,
And more than Echoes talk along the walls.
Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound.
" Come, sister, come! (it said, or seem'd to say)
" Thy place is here, sad sister, come away;

NOTES.

Ver. 298. *low-thoughted care!*] An epithet from Milton's Comus. *Warton.*

Ver. 308. *a hollow sound.*] Though Virgil evidently gave the hint: (Hinc exaudiri voces et verba vocantis visa viri. l. 4. p. 460.) yet this call of some sister, that had been involved in a similar distress, appears more solemn and interesting. *Warton.*

" Once like thyself, I trembl'd, wept, and pray'd,
" Love's victim then, tho' now a sainted maid:
" But all is calm in this eternal sleep;
" Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep,
" Ev'n superstition loses every fear:
" For God, not man, absolves our frailties here."
I come, I come! prepare your roseate bow'rs,
Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flow'rs;
Thither, where sinners may have rest, I go,
Where flames refin'd in breasts seraphic glow:
Thou, Abelard! the last sad office pay,
And smooth my passage to the realms of day:
See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,
Suck my last breath, and catch my flying soul!
Ah no—in sacred vestments may'st thou stand,
The hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,
Present the Cross before my lifted eye,
Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.
Ah then, thy once-lov'd Eloisa see!
It will be then no crime to gaze on me.
See from my cheek the transient roses fly!
See the last sparkle languish in my eye!
'Till every motion, pulse, and breath be o'er;
And ev'n my Abelard be lov'd no more.
Oh Death all-eloquent! you only prove
What dust we doat on, when 'tis man we love.
Then too, when fate shall thy fair frame destroy,
(That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy)
In trance extatic may thy pangs be drown'd,
Bright clouds descend, and Angels watch thee round,

From op'ning skies my streaming glories shine,
And Saints embrace thee with a love like mine.
May one kind grave unite each hapless name,
And graft my love immortal on thy fame!
Then, ages hence, when all my woes are o'er,
When this rebellious heart shall beat no more;
If ever chance two wand'ring lovers brings
To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,
O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,
And drink the falling tears each other sheds;
Then sadly say, with mutual pity mov'd,
" Oh may we never love as these have lov'd!"

NOTES.

Ver. 339.] These circumstances are conformable to the notions of mystic devotion. The death of St. Jerome is finely and forcibly painted by Dominichino, with such attendant particulars. *Warton.*

Ver. 343. *May one kind grave*] This wish was fulfilled. The body of Abelard, who died twenty years before Eloisa, was sent to Eloisa, who interred it in the monastery of the Paraclete; and it was accompanied with a very extraordinary form of absolution, from the famous Peter de Clugny: " Ego Petrus Cluniacensis abbas, qui Petrum Abelardum in monachum Cluniacensem recepi, et corpus ejus furtim delatum Heloissæ Abbatissæ et monialibus Paracleti concessi, auctoritate omnipotentis Dei, et omnium sanctorum, absolvo eum, prò officio, ab omnibus peccatis suis." (Epist. Abel. et Heloiss. p. 238.) " Eloisa herself, says Vigneul Marville, (Melanges, t. ii. p. 55.) solicited for this absolution; and Peter de Clugny willingly granted it. On what it could be founded, I leave to our learned theologists to determine. In certain ages, opinions have prevailed for which no solid reason can be given." When Eloisa died in 1163, she was interred by the side of her beloved husband. I must not forget to mention, for the sake of those who are fond of modern miracles, that when she was put into the grave, Abelard stretched out his arms to receive her, and closely embraced her. *Warton.*

From the full choir when loud Hosannas rise,
And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,
Amid that scene if some relenting eye
Glance on the stone where our cold relicks lie,
Devotion's self shall steal a thought from heav'n,
One human tear shall drop, and be forgiv'n.
And sure if fate some future bard shall join
In sad similitude of griefs to mine,
Condemn'd whole years in absence to deplore,
And image charms he must behold no more;

NOTES.

Ver. 358. *and be forgiv'n.*] With this line it appears at first sight, that the poem should have ended; for the eight additional verses, concerning some poet that might arise to sing their misfortune, are rather languid and flat, and might stand, it should seem, for the conclusion of almost any story, were we not informed, as I have credibly been, that they were added by the poet in allusion to his own case, and the state of his own mind. For what determined him in the choice of the subject of this epistle, was the retreat of that lady into a nunnery, whose death he had so pathetically lamented.

I will just add, that many lines in this epistle are taken from various parts of Dryden, particularly the following:

" A day for ever sad, for ever dear—"
" Now warm in love, now withering in the grave—"
" And own no laws but those which love ordains—"
" And Paradise was open'd in his face—"
" His eyes diffus'd a venerable grace—"
" She hugg'd th' offender, and forgave th' offence—"
" I come without delay; I come—"

And the two fine verses, 323 and 324, are certainly taken from Oldham on the death of Adonis:

Kiss, while I watch thy swimming eye-balls roll,
Watch thy last gasp, and catch thy springing soul!

Warton.

No one that has a heart to feel, but must acknowledge the singular beauties of this finished composition. The inherent indelicacy

Such if there be, who loves so long, so well;
Let him our sad, our tender story tell;
The well-sung woes will sooth my pensive ghost;
He best can paint them who shall feel them most.

NOTES.

licacy of the subject is one objection to it, and who but must lament its immoral effect; for of its beauty there can be but one sentiment. It may be said of it with truth, in the language of its author:

" It lives, it breathes, it speaks what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires !"

and, as long as the English language remains, it will

" Call down tears thro' every age. *Bowles.*

EPISTLES.

EPISTLE

TO

MR. ADDISON.

OCCASIONED BY HIS DIALOGUES ON MEDALS.

See the wild Waste of all-devouring years!
How Rome her own sad Sepulchre appears!
With nodding arches, broken temples spread!
The very tombs now vanish'd like their dead!

NOTES.

Mr. Addison. This was originally written in the year 1715, when Mr. Addison intended to publish his book of Medals; it was some time before he was Secretary of State; but not published till Mr. Tickel's Edition of his works: at which time the verses on Mr. Craggs, which conclude the poem, were added, viz. in 1720. *P.*

Notwithstanding the foregoing note is ascribed to Pope, the information it contains is certainly erroneous, as Mr. Addison died on the seventeenth day of June 1719; and consequently Pope could not, in the year 1720, request to share with him in the friendship of Craggs. The fact is, that the six last lines, which afterwards formed the epitaph on Craggs, appear in the epistle to Addison, not as obituary, but as an inscription on a supposed medal of Craggs, and were consequently written whilst both Addison and Craggs were living.

Dialogues on Medals.] This treatise on Medals was written by Addison in that pleasing form of composition, so unsuccessfully attempted by many modern authors, Dialogues. In no one species of writing have the Ancients so indisputable a superiority over us. The dialogues of Plato and Cicero, especially the former, are perfect dramas; where the characters are supported with consistency and nature, and the reasoning suited to the characters.

"There are in English three dialogues, and but three," says a learned

Imperial wonders rais'd on Nations spoil'd,
Where, mix'd with slaves, the groaning martyr toil'd:

NOTES.

learned and ingenious author,* who has himself practised this agreeable way of writing, "that deserve commendation, namely, the Moralists in Lord Shaftesbury, Mr. Addison's Treatise on Medals, and the Minute Philosopher of Bishop Berkley." Alciphron did, indeed, well deserve to be mentioned on this occasion; notwithstanding it has been treated with contempt by writers much inferior to Berkley in learning, genius, and taste. Omitting those passages in the fourth dialogue, where he has introduced his fanciful and whimsical opinions about *vision*, an attentive reader will find that there is scarce a single argument that can be urged in defence of Revelation, but what is here placed in the clearest light, and in the most beautiful diction: In this work there is a happy union of reasoning and imagination. The two different characters of the two different sorts of freethinkers, the sensual and the refined, are strongly contrasted with each other, and with the plainness and simplicity of Euphranor.

These dialogues of Addison are written with that sweetness and purity of style which constitute him one of the first of our prose-writers. The chief imperfection of his Treatise on Medals is, the persons introduced as speakers, in direct contradiction to the practice of the Ancients, are *fictitious*, not *real*; for Cynthio, Philander, Palæmon, Eugenio, and Theocles, cannot equally excite and engage the attention of the reader, with Socrates and Alcibiades, Atticus and Brutus, Cowley and Spratt, Maynard and Somers. It is somewhat singular, that so many of the modern dialogue-writers should have failed in this particular, when so many of the most celebrated wits of modern Italy had given them eminent examples of the contrary proceeding, and closely following the steps of the Ancients, constantly introduced living and real persons in their numerous compositions of this sort; in which they were so fond of delivering their sentiments, both on moral and critical subjects; witness the Il Cortegiano of B. Castiglione, the Asolani of P. Bembo, Dialoghi del S. Sperone, and the great Galileo, the Naugerius of Fracastorius, and Lil. Gyraldus de Poetis,

* Spence.

Huge Theatres, that now unpeopled woods,
Now drain'd a distant country of her floods:
Fanes, which admiring Gods with pride survey,
Statues of Men, scarce less alive than they!
Some felt the silent stroke of mould'ring age,
Some hostile fury, some religious rage.
Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,
And Papal piety, and Gothic fire.
Perhaps, by its own ruins sav'd from flame,
Some bury'd marble half preserves a name:

NOTES.

etis, and many others. In all which pieces the famous and living geniuses of Italy are introduced discussing the several different topics before them. *Warton.*

Ver. 2. *her own sad Sepulchre*] St. Jerome says, "Roma quondam orbis caput, postea populi Romani sepulchrum." *Warton.*

Ver. 2. *her own sad Sepulchre*]

"O Solyman, for her art thou become
A heap of stones, and *to thyself a tomb.*"

From Sandys's Psalms; one of the most extraordinary productions in verse, that the English language can produce. As a translation, it is infinitely superior to any other, both for fidelity, music, and strength of versification. It was published with Lawes's Airs, which are simple and expressive. I cannot but lament, that such music, and such words, should not be used in our parochial churches, instead of the wretched metre of Sternhold and Hopkins, or the empty and inadequate paraphrases of Tate and Brady, often set to as bad music. *Bowles.*

Ver. 6. *Where mix'd with Slaves, the groaning Martyr toil'd:*] Palladio, speaking of the Baths of Dioclesian, says, "Nell' edificatione delle quali, Dioclesiano tenne molti anni 140 mila Christiani a edificarle." *Warburton.*

Ver. 6. *groaning Martyr*] Dodwell, in his Dissertationes Cyprianicæ, has undertaken to prove that the number of Martyrs was far less than hath been usually imagined. His opinion is combated by Mosheim in the 5th Chapter of his excellent History of the Church. *Warton.*

That Name the Learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,
And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.
  Ambition sigh'd: She found it vain to trust
The faithless Column, and the crumbling Bust:
Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to shore,
Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!
Convinc'd, she now contracts her vast design,
And all her Triumphs shrink into a Coin.
A narrow ORB each crowded conquest keeps,
Beneath her Palm here sad Judea weeps.
Now scantier limits the proud Arch confine,
And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;
A small Euphrates through the piece is roll'd,
And little Eagles wave their wings in gold.
  The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame,
Through climes and ages bears each form and name:
In one short view subjected to our eye
Gods, Emp'rors, Heroes, Sages, Beauties, lie.
With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore,
Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.

NOTES.

Ver. 18. *And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.*] A fine insinuation of the want both of taste and learning in Antiquaries; whose ignorance of characters misleads them (supported only by a name) against reason and history. *Warburton.*

Ver. 19. *Ambition sigh'd:*] Such short *personifications* have a great effect. "*Silence* was pleas'd," says Milton; which personification is taken, though it happens not to have been observed by any of his commentators, from the Hero and Leander of Musæus, v. 280. *Warton.*

Ver. 35. *With* sharpen'd sight *pale Antiquaries pore,*] *Microscopic glasses,* invented by Philosophers to discover the beauties in the

This the blue varnish, that the green endears,
The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!
To gain Pescennius one employs his schemes,
One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams.
Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,
Can taste no pleasure since his shield was scour'd:
And Curio, restless by the Fair one's side,
Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.

NOTES.

the minuter works of Nature, ridiculously applied by Antiquaries to detect the cheats of counterfeit medals. *Warburton.*

Ver. 37. *This the blue varnish, that the green endears,*] *i. e.* This a collector of silver; that, of brass coins. *Warburton.*

Ver. 39. *To gain Pescennius*] The lively and ingenious Young says, in his 4th Satire,

"How his eyes languish! how his thoughts adore
That painted coat which Joseph never wore!
He shews, on holidays, a sacred pin,
That touch'd the ruff that touch'd Queen Bess's chin."

How much wit has been wasted and misplaced in endeavouring to ridicule antiquarians, whose studies are not only pleasing to the imagination, but attended with many advantages to society, especially since they have been improved, as they lately have been, with singular taste and propriety, in elucidating what, after all, is the most interesting and important part of *all* history—the *history* of *manners!* *Warton.*

Ver. 41. *Poor Vadius,*] See his history, and that of his Shield, in the *Memoirs of Scriblerus.* *Warburton.*

Ver. 43. *And Curio, restless, &c.*] The Historian Dio has given us a very extraordinary instance of this Virtuoso-taste. He tells us, that one Vibius Rufus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was the fourth husband to Cicero's widow, Terentia, then upwards of an hundred years old, used to value himself on his being possessed of the two noblest pieces of Antiquity in the world, TULLY'S WIDOW and CÆSAR'S CHAIR, that Chair in which he was assassinated in full senate. *Warburton.*

Ver. 44. *Sighs for an Otho,*] Charles Patin was banished from the

Theirs is the Vanity, the Learning thine:
Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;
Her Gods, and godlike Heroes rise to view,
And all her faded garlands bloom a-new.
Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;
These pleas'd the Fathers of poetic rage;

NOTES.

the Court, because he sold Louis XIV. an Otho that was not genuine. Patin's Treatise on Medals is a good one. Ficoroni, the celebrated virtuoso at Florence, said to Mr. Spence, "Addison did not go any great depth in the study of medals; all the knowledge he had of that kind, I believe, he received of me; and I did not give him above twenty lessons on that subject." *Warton.*

Ver. 48. *her faded*] In Winkelman's History of Art among the Ancients, is to be found perhaps the best account of the gradual decay of painting, architecture, and medals, that can be read; abounding with many instances of the fate that has befallen many exquisite pieces of art. Amongst the rest he says, that when the Austrians took Madrid, Lord Galloway searched for a very celebrated Busto of Caligula, that he knew Cardinal G. Colonna had conveyed to Spain; which fine Busto he at last found in the Escurial, where it served for a weight of the church-clock. What Winkelman says of the Laocoon, vol. ii. sect. 3. is a capital piece of criticism and just taste; which he finishes by mentioning a matchless absurdity, worthy of the country where it is to be found, that in the Castle of St. Ildephonso in Spain, there is a Relief of this group of Laocoon and his sons, with a figure of Cupid fluttering over their heads, as if flying to their assistance. As to the revival of arts in Italy, we have lately been gratified with a curious account of this important event, in the elegant History of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, their chief restorer and protector. See, particularly, chapter ix. p. 196. *Warton.*

Ver. 49. *Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;*] A senseless affectation, which some Authors of eminence have betrayed; who, when fortune or their talents have raised them to a condition to do without those arts, for which only they gained our esteem, have pretended to think letters below their character. This false shame

M. Voltaire

The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,
And Art reflected images to Art.
Oh when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,
Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?
In living medals see her wars enroll'd,
And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?
Here, rising bold, the Patriot's honest face;
There Warriors frowning in historic brass:
Then future ages with delight shall see
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree;
Or in fair series laurel'd Bards be shown,
A Virgil there, and here an Addison.
Then shall thy CRAGGS (and let me call him mine)
On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine;

NOTES.

M. Voltaire has very well, and with proper indignation, exposed in his account of Mr. Congreve: "He had one defect, which was, his entertaining too mean an idea of his first profession, (that of a Writer,) though it was to this he owed his fame and fortune. He spoke of his works as of trifles that were beneath him; and hinted to me, in our first conversation, that I should visit him upon no other footing than that of a gentleman who led a life of plainness and simplicity. I answered, that had he been so unfortunate as to be a mere gentleman, I should never have come to see him; and I was very much disgusted at so unseasonable a piece of vanity." *Letters concerning the English Nation*, xix. *Warburton.*

Ver. 53. *Oh when shall Britain, &c.*] A compliment to one of Mr. Addison's papers in the Spectator, on this subject. *Warburton.*

Ver. 62. *A Virgil there,*] Copied evidently from Tickell to Addison on his Rosamond:

"Which gain'd a Virgil and an Addison."

This elegant copy of Verses was so acceptable to Addison, that it was the foundation of a lasting friendship betwixt them. Tickell deserves a higher place among poets than is usually allotted to him. *Warton.*

With aspect open, shall erect his head,
And round the orb in lasting notes be read,
" Statesman, yet friend to Truth! of soul sincere,
" In action faithful, and in honour clear;

NOTES.

Ver. 67. *Statesman, yet friend to Truth, &c.*] It should be remembered, that this poem was composed to be printed before Mr. Addison's *Discourse on Medals*, in which there is the following censure of *long legends* upon coins: " The first fault I find with a modern legend is its diffusiveness. You have sometimes the whole side of a medal over-run with it. One would fancy the Author had a design of being Ciceronian—but it is not only the tediousness of these inscriptions that I find fault with; supposing them of a moderate length, why must they be in verse? We should be surprised to see the title of a serious book in rhyme." *Dial.* iii.

Warburton.

Ver. 67. *Statesman,*] These nervous and finished lines were afterwards inscribed as an epitaph on this worthy man's monument in Westminster Abbey, with the alteration of two words in the last verse, which there stands thus:

" Prais'd, wept, and honour'd by the Muse he lov'd."

It was Craggs, who, having raised himself by his abilities, in the most friendly manner offered our Author a pension of three hundred pounds per annum.

Though Pope enlisted under the banner of Bolingbroke, in what was called the country party, and in violent opposition to the measures of Walpole, yet his clear and good sense enabled him to see the follies and virulence of all parties; and it was his favourite maxim, that, however factious men thought proper to distinguish themselves by names, yet, when they got into power, they all acted much in the same manner; saying,

" I know how like Whig ministers to Tory."

And among his manuscripts were four very sensible, though not very poetical lines, which contain the most solid apology that can be made for a minister of this country:

" Our ministers like gladiators live:
'Tis half their business blows to ward, or give:
The good their virtue would effect, or sense,
Dies between exigents and self-defence.

Yet

" Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
" Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend;
" Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,
" And prais'd unenvy'd, by the Muse he lov'd."

NOTES.

Yet he appears sometimes to have forgotten this candid reflection. *Warton.*

Ver. 72. *And prais'd* unenvy'd, *by the Muse he lov'd.*] It was not likely that men acting in so different spheres, as were those of Mr. Craggs and Mr. Pope, should have their friendship disturbed by Envy. We must suppose then that some circumstances in the friendship of Mr. Pope and Mr. Addison are hinted at in this place. *Warburton.*

EPISTLE

TO

ROBERT EARL OF OXFORD, AND EARL MORTIMER.

PREFIXED TO DR. PARNELLE'S POEMS, PUBLISHED AFTER HIS DEATH BY MR. POPE.

Such were the notes thy once-lov'd Poet sung,
Till Death untimely stopp'd his tuneful tongue.
Oh just beheld, and lost! admir'd and mourn'd!
With softest manners, gentlest arts adorn'd!

NOTES.

Epistle to Robert Earl of Oxford.] This Epistle was sent to the Earl of Oxford with Dr. Parnelle's Poems published by our Author, after the said Earl's imprisonment in the Tower, and retreat into the country, in the Year 1721. *P.*

Ver. 1. *Such were the notes*] The notes were charming indeed! We have few pieces of Poetry superior to Parnelle's Rise of Woman; the Fairy Tale; the Hymn to Contentment; Health, an Eclogue; the Vigil of Venus; the Night-piece on Death; the Allegory on Man; and the Hermit. The best account of the original of this last exquisite poem is given in the third volume of the History of English Poetry, p. 31.; from whence it appears that it was taken from the eightieth chapter of that curious repository of ancient tales, the Gesta Romanorum. The story is related in the fourth volume of Howel's Letters, who says he found it in Sir Philip Herbert's Conceptions; but this fine Apologue was much better related in the Divine Dialogues of Dr. Henry More, Dial. ii. part 1; and Parnelle seems to have copied it chiefly from this Platonic Theologist, who had not less imagination than learning. Pope used to say that it was originally written in Spanish: from the

Blest in each science, blest in ev'ry strain!
Dear to the Muse!—to HARLEY dear—in vain!
For him, thou oft hast bid the World attend,
Fond to forget the Statesman in the Friend;
For SWIFT and him, despis'd the farce of state,
The sober follies of the wise and great;
Dext'rous, the craving, fawning crowd to quit,
And pleas'd to 'scape from Flattery to Wit.
Absent or dead, still let a friend be dear,
(A sigh the absent claims, the dead a tear)
Recall those nights that clos'd thy toilsome days,
Still hear thy Parnelle in his living lays,
Who, careless now of int'rest, fame, or fate,
Perhaps forgets that OXFORD e'er was great;
Or deeming meanest what we greatest call,
Beholds thee glorious only in thy fall.
And sure, if aught below the seats divine
Can touch Immortals, 'tis a Soul like thine:

NOTES.

the early connection between the Spaniards and Arabians, it may be suspected that it was an Oriental tale. Voltaire has inserted it in his Zadig, without mentioning a syllable of the place whence he borrowed it. *Warton.*

Ver 21. *And sure, if aught*] Strength of mind appears to have been the predominant characteristic of Lord Oxford; of which he gave the most striking proofs when he was stabbed, displaced, imprisoned. These noble and nervous lines allude to these circumstances; of his fortitude and firmness another striking proof remains, in a letter which the Earl wrote from the Tower to a friend, who advised him to meditate an escape, and which is worthy of the greatest hero of antiquity. This extraordinary letter I had the pleasure of reading, by the favour of the Earl's excellent grand-daughter, the late Dutchess Dowager of Portland, who inherited that love of literature and science, so peculiar to her ancestors and family. *Warton.*

A Soul supreme, in each hard instance try'd,
Above all Pain, all Passion, and all Pride,
The rage of Pow'r, the blast of public breath,
The lust of Lucre, and the dread of Death.
In vain to Deserts thy retreat is made;
The Muse attends thee to thy silent shade:
'Tis her's, the brave man's latest steps to trace,
Rejudge his acts, and dignify disgrace.
When Int'rest calls off all her sneaking train,
And all th' oblig'd desert, and all the vain;
She waits, or to the scaffold, or the cell,
When the last ling'ring friend has bid farewell.
Ev'n now, she shades thy Ev'ning-walk with bays,
(No hireling she, no prostitute to praise)
Ev'n now, observant of the parting ray,
Eyes the calm Sun-set of thy various Day,
Through Fortune's cloud one truly great can see,
Nor fears to tell, that MORTIMER is he.

THERE are few verses in Pope more correct, more musical, more dignified, and affecting, than these to Lord Oxford; and such a testimony to his merit in the hour of misfortune, must have been as grateful to Lord Oxford, as it was honourable to Pope. *Bowles.*

EPISTLE

TO

JAMES CRAGGS, ESQ.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

A soul as full of Worth, as void of Pride,
Which nothing seeks to shew, or needs to hide,
Which nor to Guilt nor Fear, its caution owes,
And boasts a warmth that from no passion flows.
A Face untaught to feign; a judging Eye,
That darts severe upon a rising Lie,
And strikes a blush through frontless Flattery.

NOTES.

Secretary of State.] In the year 1720. *P.*

Mr. Craggs was made Secretary at War, in 1717, when the Earl of Sunderland and Mr. Addison were appointed Secretaries of State.

This Epistle appears to have been written soon after his being made one of the Secretaries of State. He was deeply implicated in the famous South-Sea scheme. When Mr. Shippen, alluding to him, said in the House of Commons, (at the time a motion was made to secure the persons and property of the South-Sea directors,) " in his opinion, there were some men in high stations, who were no less guilty than the directors;" Mr. Craggs immediately answered, *he was ready to give satisfaction to any man, who should question him in that House, or out of it.* This created great offence, and was understood as a challenge, but after some ferment, Mr. Craggs said, that " by *giving satisfaction*" he meant, clearing his conduct.—Tyndal's Continuation of Rapin.

He died soon after the detection of the fallacy of the *great scheme*, and would most probably have been called to a severe account had he lived. He died of the small-pox, on the ninth day, 16th February, 1721. *Bowles.*

I shall

All this thou wert; and being this before,
Know, Kings and Fortune cannot make thee more.
Then scorn to gain a Friend by servile ways,
Nor wish to lose a Foe these Virtues raise;
But candid, free, sincere, as you began,
Proceed—a Minister, but still a Man.
Be not (exalted to whate'er degree)
Asham'd of any Friend, not ev'n of Me:
The Patriot's plain, but untrod, path pursue;
If not, 'tis I must be asham'd of You.

I shall add a dialogue by Mr. Pope, in verse, that is genuine:

POPE.

" Since my old friend is grown so great,
As to be Minister of State,
I'm told, but 'tis not true I hope,
That Craggs will be asham'd of Pope."

CRAGGS.

" Alas! if I am such a creature,
To grow the worse for growing greater;
Why, faith, in spite of all my brags,
'Tis Pope must be asham'd of Craggs." *Warton.*

EPISTLE

TO

MR. JERVAS,

WITH MR DRYDEN'S TRANSLATION OF FRESNOY'S ART OF PAINTING.

THIS Verse be thine, my friend, nor thou refuse
This, from no venal or ungrateful Muse.
Whether thy hand strike out some free design,
Where Life awakes, and dawns at ev'ry line;

NOTES.

EPISTLE TO MR. JERVAS.] This Epistle was originally printed in 1717. *P.*

Jervas owed much more of his reputation to this Epistle than to his skill as a painter. "He was defective," says Mr. Walpole, "in drawing, colouring, and composition; his pictures are a light, flimsy kind of fan-painting, as large as the life: his vanity was excessive." The reason why Lady Bridgewater's name is so frequently repeated in this Epistle is, because Jervas affected to be violently in love with her. As she was sitting to him one day, he ran over the beauties of her face with rapture; but added, "I cannot help telling your Ladyship you have not a handsome ear." "No!—Pray, Mr. Jervas, what is a handsome ear?" He turned aside his cap, and shewed his own!

Mr. Mason has translated Fresnoy with elegance and fidelity; and Sir Joshua Reynolds added to the translation, learned, useful, scientifical, and ingenious notes. *Warton.*

Jervas was one of the most intimate friends of Pope, and appears from his own letters to have been a man of good sense and sincerity. He was distinguished by his knowledge of works of art, and was sent to Italy at the expense of Dr. Clarke, Member of Parliament for the University of Oxford. He is also well known by his excellent translation of Don Quixote.

Or blend in beauteous tints the colour'd mass,
And from the canvas call the mimic face:
Read these instructive leaves, in which conspire
Fresnoy's close Art, and Dryden's native Fire;
And reading wish, like theirs, our fate and fame,
So mix'd our studies, and so join'd our name;
Like them to shine through long succeeding age,
So just thy skill, so regular my rage.
Smit with the love of Sister-Arts we came,
And met congenial, mingling flame with flame;
Like friendly colours found them both unite,
And each from each contract new strength and light.
How oft' in pleasing tasks we wear the day,
While summer-suns roll unperceiv'd away?
How oft our slowly-growing works impart,
While Images reflect from art to art?
How oft review; each finding like a friend
Something to blame, and something to commend?

NOTES.

Ver. 13. *Smit with the love*] These fine lines are read with additional pleasure, when we reflect that they are a true representation of the manner in which Pope and his friend were accustomed to pass their time at the period they were written. Of the proficiency made by Pope, and of his character of his own attempts at painting, some account is given in his Life, prefixed to this edition.

Ver. 13. *Sister-Arts*] To the poets that practised and understood painting, the names of Dante, of Flatman, of Butler, of Dyer, may be added that of our author; a portrait of whose painting is in the possession of Lord Mansfield: a head of Betterton. *Warton.*

There is also another portrait by Pope in the possession of his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, at Arundel castle. *Bowles.*

What flatt'ring scenes our wand'ring fancy wrought,
Rome's pompous glories rising to our thought!
Together o'er the Alps methinks we fly,
Fir'd with Ideas of fair Italy.
With thee, on Raphael's Monument I mourn,
Or wait inspiring Dreams at Maro's Urn:
With thee repose, where Tully once was laid,
Or seek some Ruin's formidable shade:
While Fancy brings the vanish'd piles to view,
And builds imaginary Rome a-new,
Here thy well-study'd marbles fix our eye;
A fading Fresco here demands a sigh;
Each heav'nly piece unwearied we compare,
Match Raphael's grace with thy lov'd Guido's air,

NOTES.

Ver. 25. *Together o'er the Alps*] An excursion together to Italy was the frequent subject of conversation between them, and would in all probability have been carried into effect, had not the infirm constitution of Pope prevented him from undertaking the journey.

Ver. 36. *Match Raphael's grace*] If the character of Raffaelle were to be given in one word, this was the only one suited to the occasion. This is the characteristic in which he stands unrivalled. The works of Giulio Romano, and his other pupils, please the imagination and gratify the judgment, but the inimitable *grace* of Raphael touches the heart.

Ver. 36. *With thy lov'd Guido's air,*] The poet proposes to compare the *grace* of Raffaelle with the *air* of Guido. In the former Raffaelle stands pre-eminent; in the latter Guido is allowed to excel. The figures of Raffaelle, although chastely designed, and correctly drawn, appear occasionally short and heavy; those of Guido are beautifully proportioned, and abound with every variety of attitude; but in point of sensibility and grace, the inferiority of Guido is apparent

Carracci's strength, Correggio's softer line,
Paulo's free stroke, and Titian's warmth divine.

NOTES.

rent. It may also be observed, that in the instances where the works of these great masters do not fully satisfy our conceptions, it arises from causes precisely the reverse of each other. In Raffaelle from a simplicity of style which seems to fall short of the subject; whilst in Guido we too often perceive an excess of art, which is much more discordant to our feelings. We readily admit of whatever indicates excellence, though it may not attain perfection; but we reject whatever exceeds the limits of truth and nature. Affectation is the bane of excellence in all the arts.

Ver. 37. *Carracci's strength.*] "Give me a good outline, and bricks in the middle," said Annibale Carracci. Agostino has left an elegant sonnet on painting. *Warton.*

If Annibale Carracci ever made use of the expression above attributed to him, which is at least doubtful, it confers no honour on him as an artist. He would indeed have had more reason on his side in asserting the direct contrary, and saying "give me correct light and shadow, and let the outline take care of itself." Outline is only a ladder; when the building is finished it is taken away.

By *Carracci's strength*, Pope probably meant to refer to Annibale only; the most distinguished of the three for his knowledge of the human figure. In elegance of style he was rivalled by his brother Agostino; and was excelled in feeling and taste by his cousin Lodovico. Together, they formed what has been called the eclectic School, by which they proposed to unite the excellencies of all preceding masters; an idea which Agostino has endeavoured to express in the sonnet above referred to.

Ver. 37. *Correggio's softer line,*] The works of Correggio are well characterized by this epithet; the excellence of his *chiaroscuro*, and just approximation of light and shadow, softening and dispensing with that outline which is often too strongly expressed in the works of many eminent painters. It has been said that the line of Correggio is incorrect; but they who have made this assertion have probably not sufficiently attended to the circumstances under

How finish'd with illustrious toil appears!
This small, well-polish'd Gem, the work of years!

NOTES.

under which his works were produced and the situation in which they are placed.

Some figures monstrous and mis-shap'd appear,
Consider'd singly, or beheld too near,
Which but proportion'd to their light or place,
Due distance reconciles to form and grace.
Essay on Criticism.

Correggio was the first who succeeded in what is called foreshortening *(scorcio)*, and in giving form, proportion, and effect to figures exhibited in the interior of ceilings and cupolas; an art which his great contemporaries Raffaelle and Michelagnolo could never fully attain. "I was astonished," says Agostino Caracci, in a letter to his brother Annibale, on first viewing the works of Correggio at Parma, "to see such an immense work so well represented, *di sotto in su*, with such rigorous truth, but at the same time with such judgment, such grace, and such colouring, as to appear real life." Correggio designed for the understanding as well as the eye, and attempted by the parts which were seen to give an idea of those not seen. His figures were not measured by the rule and line, but by the projection and depth of a painter's eye, and they can only be proposed as models of art, to those who know with what precautions and exceptions they are to be used.

Ver. 38. *Paulo's free stroke and Titian's warmth divine*] The free stroke of Paolo Veronese, applies to the facility of his colouring, in which he so eminently excelled; the warmth divine of Titian, to the glow and effect which characterize all his productions, and which compelled Michelagnolo, on seeing his picture of Danae, to acknowledge, that "if he had been as accomplished in the principles of design, as he was in the endowments of nature, in giving to his productions the animation of life, he would have attained the perfection of the art."

Dr. Warton informs us, that Sir Joshua Reynolds told him, he did not think these artists exactly characterized by Pope. To give the peculiar character of an artist by a single epithet, is not an easy task, and notwithstanding so high an authority, it would not

Yet still how faint by precept is exprest
The living image in the painter's breast?
Thence endless streams of fair Ideas flow,
Strike in the sketch, or in the picture glow;
Thence Beauty waking all her forms, supplies
An Angel's sweetness, or Bridgewater's eyes.
Muse! at that Name thy sacred sorrows shed,
Those tears eternal, that embalm the dead:
Call round her Tomb each object of desire,
Each purer frame inform'd with purer fire:
Bid her be all that cheers or softens life,
The tender sister, daughter, friend, and wife:
Bid her be all that makes mankind adore;
Then view this Marble, and be vain no more!
Yet still her charms in breathing paint engage;
Her modest cheek shall warm a future age.
Beauty, frail flow'r, that ev'ry season fears,
Blooms in thy colours for a thousand years.
Thus Churchill's race shall other hearts surprize,
And other Beauties envy Worsley's eyes;

NOTES.

not perhaps be easy to accomplish it with greater accuracy in an equal compass.

Ver. 40. *the work of years!*] Fresnoy employed above twenty years in finishing his poem. *P.*

Ver. 43. *Strike in the sketch,*] Gray, in his verses to Mr. Bentley, has beautifully expressed and described the person and design:

"See, in their course, each transitory thought,
Fix'd by his touch a lasting essence take;
Each dream, in fancy's airy colouring wrought,
To local symmetry and life awake." Works, 4to.

Warton.

Ver. 59. *Thus Churchill's race*] Churchill's race were the four beautiful daughters of John the great Duke of Marlborough: Henrietta

Each pleasing Blount shall endless smiles bestow,
And soft Belinda's blush for ever glow.
Oh lasting as those Colours may they shine,
Free as thy stroke, yet faultless as thy line;
New graces yearly like thy works display,
Soft without weakness, without glaring gay;
Led by some rule, that guides, but not constrains;
And finish'd more through happiness than pains.
The kindred Arts shall in their praise conspire,
One dip the pencil, and one string the lyre.
Yet should the Graces all thy figures place,
And breathe an air divine on ev'ry face;
Yet should the Muses bid my numbers roll
Strong as their charms, and gentle as their soul;
With Zeuxis' Helen thy Bridgewater vie,
And these be sung till Granville's Myra die:
Alas! how little from the grave we claim!
Thou but preserv'st a Face, and I a Name.

NOTES.

Henrietta, Countess of Godolphin, afterwards Dutchess of Marlborough; Anne, Countess of Sunderland; Elizabeth, Countess of Bridgewater; and Mary, Dutchess of Montagu. Their portraits are at Blenheim. Lady Bridgewater, whom Jervas affected to be in love with, and who amused herself at his expense, was the most beautiful of the four sisters. She died, March 1713-14, aged 27. In 1720, her husband was created Duke of Bridgewater. *Bowles.*

Ver. 60. *Worsley's eyes:*] This was Frances Lady Worsley, Wife of Sir Robert Worsley, Bart. of Appuldercombe, in the Isle of Wight; Mother of Lady Carteret, Wife of John Lord Carteret, afterwards Earl Granville. There is an excellent letter of this Lady to Dr. Swift in his Letters, p. 77. *Warton.*

EPISTLE

TO

MRS. MARTHA BLOUNT,

ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

Oh be thou blest with all that Heav'n can send,
Long Health, long Youth, long Pleasure, and a Friend:
Not with those Toys the female world admire,
Riches that vex, and Vanities that tire.
With added years if Life bring nothing new,
But like a Sieve let ev'ry blessing through,
Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,
And all we gain, some sad Reflection more;
Is that a Birth-day? 'tis alas! too clear,
'Tis but the Fun'ral of the former year.

Let Joy or Ease, let Affluence or Content,
And the gay Conscience of a life well spent,

NOTES.

Ver. 10. *'Tis but the Fun'ral*] Immediately after this line were these four following, in the original:

" If there's no hope, with kind tho' fainter ray,
To gild the evening of our future day;
If every page of life's long volume tell
The same dull story, Mordaunt, thou did'st well!"

Colonel Mordaunt, who destroyed himself, though not under the pressure of any ill or misfortune. *Warton.*

Calm ev'ry thought, inspirit ev'ry grace,
Glow in thy heart, and smile upon thy face.
Let day improve on day, and year on year,
Without a pain, a trouble, or a fear;
Till Death unfelt that tender frame destroy,
In some soft Dream, or extasy of Joy,
Peaceful sleep out the Sabbath of the Tomb,
And wake to Raptures in a Life to come.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 15. Originally thus in the MS.

And oh since Death must that fair frame destroy,
Die, by some sudden extasy of Joy;
In some soft dream may thy mild soul remove,
And be thy latest gasp a sigh of Love.

EPISTLE

TO

MRS. MARTHA BLOUNT,

WITH THE WORKS OF VOITURE.

In these gay thoughts the Loves and Graces shine,
And all the Writer lives in ev'ry line;
His easy Art may happy Nature seem,
Trifles themselves are elegant in him.
Sure to charm all was his peculiar fate,
Who without flatt'ry pleas'd the fair and great;
Still with esteem no less convers'd than read;
With wit well-natur'd, and with books well-bred:
His heart, his mistress and his friend did share,
His time, the Muse, the witty, and the fair.
Thus wisely careless, innocently gay,
Cheerful he play'd the trifle, Life, away;
Till fate scarce felt his gentle breath supprest,
As smiling Infants sport themselves to rest,
Ev'n rival Wits did Voiture's death deplore,
And the gay mourn'd, who never mourn'd before;

NOTES.

Ver. 13. *As smiling Infants, &c.*] There is a beautiful passage of this sort in Temple's Essays:—"After all, life is like a froward child, that must be trifled with, and played with, till it falls asleep, and then the care is over." *Bowles.*

The truest hearts for Voiture heav'd with sighs,
Voiture was wept by all the brightest Eyes:
The Smiles and Loves had died in Voiture's death,
But that for ever in his lines they breathe.
  Let the strict life of graver mortals be
A long, exact, and serious Comedy;
In ev'ry scene some Moral let it teach,
And, if it can, at once both please and preach.
Let mine an innocent gay Farce appear,
And more diverting still than regular,
Have humour, wit, a native ease and grace,
Tho' not too strictly bound to time and place;
Critics in Wit, or Life, are hard to please,
Few write to those, and none can live to these.
  Too much your Sex is by their forms confin'd,
Severe to all, but most to Womankind;
Custom, grown blind with age, must be your guide;
Your pleasure is a vice, but not your pride;
By Nature yielding, stubborn but for fame;
Made Slaves by honour, and made Fools by shame.
Marriage may all those petty Tyrants chase,
But sets up one, a greater in their place:

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 19. *The Smiles*] Alluding to an elegant epitaph on Voiture:

" Etruscæ Veneres, Camœnæ Iberæ,
Hermes Gallicus, et Latina Siren;
Risus, Deliciæ, et Dicacitates,
Lusûs, Ingenium, Joci, Lepores:
Et quidquid usquam fuit elegantiarum,
Quo Vecturius hoc jacent sepulcro." *Warton.*

Well might you wish for change by those accurst,
But the last Tyrant ever proves the worst.
Still in constraint your suff'ring Sex remains,
Or bound in formal, or in real chains:
Whole years neglected, for some months ador'd,
The fawning Servant turns a haughty Lord.
Ah quit not the free innocence of life,
For the dull glory of a virtuous Wife;
Nor let false Shews, nor empty Titles please:
Aim not at Joy, but rest content with Ease.
  The Gods, to curse Pamela with her pray'rs,
Gave the gilt Coach, and dappled Flanders Mares,
The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state,
And, to complete her bliss, a Fool for Mate.
She glares in Balls, front Boxes, and the Ring,
A vain, unquiet, glitt'ring, wretched thing!
Pride, Pomp, and State but reach her outward part;
She sighs, and is no Duchess at her heart.
  But, Madam, if the fates withstand, and you
Are destin'd Hymen's willing Victim too;
Trust not too much your now resistless charms,
Those, Age or Sickness, soon or late, disarms:
Good-humour only teaches charms to last,
Still makes new conquests, and maintains the past;
Love, rais'd on Beauty, will like that decay,
Our hearts may bear its slender chain a day;
As flow'ry bands in wantonness are worn,
A morning's pleasure, and at evening torn;
This binds in ties more easy, yet more strong,
The willing heart, and only holds it long.

Thus Voiture's early care still shone the same,
And Monthausier was only chang'd in name:
By this, ev'n now they live, ev'n now they charm,
Their Wit still sparkling, and their flames still warm.
Now crown'd with Myrtle, on th' Elysian coast,
Amid those Lovers, joys his gentle Ghost:
Pleas'd, while with smiles his happy lines you view,
And finds a fairer Ramboüillet in you.
The brightest eyes of France inspir'd his Muse;
The brightest eyes of Britain now peruse;
And dead, as living, 'tis our Author's pride
Still to charm those who charm the world beside.

NOTES.

Ver. 69. *Thus Voiture's early care*] Mademoiselle Paulet. *P.*

EPISTLE

TO

MRS. TERESA BLOUNT,

ON HER LEAVING THE TOWN AFTER THE CORONATION.

As some fond Virgin, whom her mother's care
Drags from the Town to wholesome Country air,
Just when she learns to roll a melting eye,
And hear a spark, yet think no danger nigh;
From the dear man unwilling she must sever,
Yet takes one kiss before she parts for ever:
Thus from the world fair Zephalinda flew,
Saw others happy, and with sighs withdrew;
Not that their pleasures caus'd her discontent,
She sigh'd not that they stay'd, but that she went.
She went, to plain-work, and to purling brooks,
Old-fashion'd halls, dull Aunts, and croaking rooks:
She went from Op'ra, Park, Assembly, Play,
To morning-walks, and pray'rs three hours a day;
To part her time 'twixt reading and bohea,
To muse, and spill her solitary tea,
Or o'er cold coffee trifle with the spoon,
Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon:
Divert her eyes with pictures in the fire,
Hum half a tune, tell stories to the squire;

NOTES.

Coronation] Of King George the first, 1715. *P.*

Ver. 7. *Zephalinda*] The assumed name of Teresa Blount, under which she corresponded for many years with a Mr. More, under the feigned name of *Alexis*. *Bowles.*

Up to her godly garret after sev'n,
There starve and pray, for that's the way to heav'n.
  Some Squire, perhaps, you take delight to rack;
Whose game is Whisk, whose treat a toast in sack;
Who visits with a Gun, presents you birds,
Then gives a smacking buss, and cries,—No Words!
Or with his hound comes hallooing from the stable;
Makes love with nods, and knees beneath a table;
Whose laughs are hearty, tho' his jests are coarse,
And loves you best of all things—but his horse.
  In some fair ev'ning, on your elbow laid,
You dream of Triumphs in the rural shade;
In pensive thought recall the fancy'd scene,
See Coronations rise on ev'ry green;
Before you pass th' imaginary sights
Of Lords, and Earls, and Dukes, and garter'd Knights,
While the spread fan o'ershades your closing eyes;
Then give one flirt, and all the vision flies.
Thus vanish sceptres, coronets, and balls,
And leave you in lone woods, or empty walls!
  So when your Slave, at some dear idle time,
(Not plagu'd with head-achs, or the want of rhyme)
Stands in the streets, abstracted from the crew,
And while he seems to study, thinks of you;
Just when his fancy points your sprightly eyes,
Or sees the blush of soft Parthenia rise,
Gay pats my shoulder, and you vanish quite,
Streets, Chairs, and Coxcombs rush upon my sight;
Vex'd to be still in town, I knit my brow,
Look sour, and hum a Tune, as you may now.

VERSES TO MR. C.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE.

London, Oct. 22.

FEW words are best; I wish you well;
  BETHEL, I'm told, will soon be here;
Some morning walks along the Mall,
  And evening friends, will end the year.

If, in this interval, between
  The falling leaf and coming frost,
You please to see, on Twit'nam green
  Your friend, your poet, and your host;

For three whole days you here may rest
  From Office business, news and strife;
And (what most folks would think a jest)
  Want nothing else, except your wife.

PROLOGUES

AND

EPILOGUES.

PROLOGUE

TO

MR. ADDISON'S TRAGEDY OF CATO.*

THE Prologue to Addison's Tragedy of Cato, is superior to any Prologue of Dryden; who, notwithstanding, is so justly celebrated for this species of writing. The Prologues of Dryden are satirical and facetious; this of Pope is solemn and sublime, as the subject required. Those of Dryden contain general topics of criticism and wit, and may precede any play whatsoever, even tragedy or comedy. This of Pope is particular, and appropriated to the tragedy alone which it was designed to introduce. *Warton.*

To the above just tribute to the merit of the following Prologue, I shall add the opinion of an excellent critic, the late Dr. Aikin, who has observed that "scarcely any thing grave or dignified had been offered to the public in this form, till Pope, inspired by the noble subject of Addison's Tragedy, composed this piece; which not only stands at the head of all prologues, but is scarcely surpassed in vigour of expression and elevation of sentiment by any passage in his own works."

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the genius, and to mend the heart,
To make mankind, in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:

NOTES.

* This Prologue, and the Epilogue (to Jane Shore) are the most perfect models of this species of writing, both in the serious and the ludicrous way. *Warburton.*

The former is much the better of the two; for some of Dryden's, of the latter kind, are unequalled. *Warton.*

For this the Tragic Muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream through ev'ry age;
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.
Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
The hero's glory, or the virgin's love;
In pitying love, we but our weakness show,
And wild Ambition well deserves its woe.
Here tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause,
Such tears as Patriots shed for dying Laws:
He bids your breasts with ancient ardour rise,
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.
Virtue confess'd in human shape he draws,
What Plato thought, and godlike Cato was:
No common object to your sight displays,
But what with pleasure Heav'n itself surveys,
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling state.

NOTES.

Ver. 7. *Tyrants no more*] Louis XIV. wished to have pardoned the Cardinal de Rohan, after hearing the Cinna of Corneille. *Warton.*

Ver. 11. *In pitying love,*] Why then did Addison introduce the loves of Juba and Marcia? which Pope said to Mr. Spence, were not in the original plan of the play, but were introduced in compliance with the popular practice of the stage. *Warton.*

Ver. 20. *But what with pleasure*] This alludes to a famous passage of Seneca, which Mr. Addison afterwards used as a motto to his play, when it was printed. *Warburton.*

Ver. 21. *A brave man, &c.*] The noble passage of Seneca, which Addison adopted as a Motto, and to which Pope in this passage finely alludes, is this,

" Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod *respiciat, intentus operi suo,* DEUS! Ecce par Deo dignum, *vir fortis* cum malâ fortunâ compositus!

While Cato gives his little Senate laws,
What bosom beats not in his Country's cause?
Who sees him act, but envies ev'ry deed?
Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
Ev'n when proud Cæsar 'midst triumphal cars,
The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state;
As her dead Father's rev'rend image past,
The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast;
The Triumph ceas'd, tears gush'd from ev'ry eye;
The world's great Victor pass'd unheeded by;
Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,
And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.

NOTES.

positus! Non video, inquam, quid habeat in terris Jupiter pulchrius, si convertere animum velit, quàm ut spectet CATONEM, jam partibus non semel fractis, nihilominùs inter ruinas publicas erectum."

Pope has very much heightened the idea of Seneca, in one passage, "*Fortis* vir, *malâ* fortunâ compositus;" which is far less animated than

A brave man *struggling* in the *storms* of fate!

Let me take this opportunity of remarking, that Pope has very seldom laid the *stress*, as it is in the line,

A *brāve* măn——

The stress, however, laid upon the epithet in this manner, has often a pleasing effect, and, when it is judiciously introduced, is particularly grateful to the ear. Milton and Shakespear often accent a line in this manner, and who but feels its occasional propriety and beauty?

"Thro' the HIGH wood, echoing shrill." Allegro.
"What time the GRAY fly winds her sullen horn." Lycidas.
"On which the SWART star sparely looks." *Bowles.*

Ver. 27. *Ev'n when*] The twenty-seventh, thirtieth, thirty-fourth, thirty-ninth, and forty-fifth lines, are artful allusions to the character and history of Cato himself. *Warton.*

Britons, attend: be worth like this approv'd,
And show, you have the virtue to be mov'd.
With honest scorn the first fam'd Cato view'd
Rome learning arts from Greece whom she subdu'd;
Your scene precariously subsists too long
On French translation, and Italian song.
Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage;
Be justly warm'd with your own native rage:
Such Plays alone should win a British ear,
As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.

NOTES.

Ver. 37. *Britons, attend:*] Spence told me, that Pope had written it—"Britons, arise"; but that Addison, frightened at so strong an expression, as promoting insurrection, lowered and weakened it, by the word, "attend." *Warton.*

Ver. 42. *On French translation,*] He glances obliquely at the Distrest Mother of his old antagonist, Philips, taken, evidently, from Racine. Cato's last soliloquy is translated with great purity and elegance by Bland.

It is a little remarkable that the last line of Cato is Pope's; and the last of Eloisa is Addison's. *Warton.*

Ver. 45. *Such Plays alone*] Addison, having finished and laid by, for several years, the first four acts of Cato, applied to Hughes for a fifth, and Dr. Johnson, from entertaining too mean an opinion of Hughes, does not think the application serious. When Hughes brought his supplement, he found the author himself had finished his play. Hughes was very capable of writing this fifth act. The Siege of Damascus is a better tragedy than Cato; though Pope affected to speak slightingly of its author. An audience was packed by Steele on the first night of Cato; and Addison suffered inexpressible uneasiness and solicitude during the representation. Bolingbroke called Booth to his box, and gave him fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well, against a perpetual dictator. *Warton.*

Ver. 46. *As Cato's self, &c.*] This alludes to that famous story of his coming into the Theatre, and going out again, related by Martial. *Warburton.*

PROLOGUE

TO

SOPHONISBA.

BY POPE AND MALLET.*

When Learning, after the long Gothic night,
Fair, o'er the western world, renew'd its light,
With arts arising, Sophonisba rose;
The tragic Muse, returning, wept her woes.
With her th' Italian scene first learn'd to glow,
And the first tears for her were taught to flow:
Her charms the Gallic Muses next inspir'd;
Corneille himself saw, wonder'd, and was fir'd.

What foreign theatres with pride have shewn,
Britain, by juster title, makes her own.
When freedom is the cause, 'tis her's to fight,
And hers, when freedom is the theme, to write.
For this a British Author bids again
The Heroine rise, to grace the British scene:
Here, as in life, she breathes her genuine flame,
She asks, what bosom has not felt the same?

NOTES.

* I have been told by Savage, that of the Prologue to Sophonisba, the first part was written by Pope, who could not be persuaded to finish it, and that the concluding lines were written by Mallet. *Johnson.*

Asks of the British Youth——is silence there?
She dares to ask it of the British Fair.
To-night our home-spun Author would be true,
At once to Nature, History, and you.
Well-pleas'd to give our neighbours due applause,
He owns their learning, but disdains their laws,
Not to his patient touch, or happy flame,
'Tis to his British heart he trusts for fame.
If France excel him in one free-born thought,
The Man, as well as Poet, is in fault.
Nature! informer of the poet's art,
Whose force alone can raise or melt the heart,
Thou art his guide; each passion, ev'ry line,
Whate'er he draws to please, must all be thine.
Be thou his judge: in ev'ry candid breast,
Thy silent whisper is the sacred text.

PROLOGUE

To a Play for Mr. DENNIS'S *Benefit in* 1733, *when he was old, blind, and in great Distress, a little before his Death.*

As when that Hero, who in each Campaign,
Had brav'd the *Goth*, and many a *Vandal* slain,
Lay fortune-struck, a spectacle of woe!
Wept by each Friend, forgiv'n by ev'ry Foe;
Was there a gen'rous, a reflecting mind,
But pitied BELISARIUS old and blind?
Was there a Chief but melted at the Sight?
A common Soldier, but who clubb'd his mite?
Such, such emotions should in *Britons* rise,
When press'd by want and weakness DENNIS lies;

NOTES.

Ver. 6. *But pitied Belisarius, &c.*] Nothing could be more happily imagined than this allusion, nor more finely conducted. The continued pleasantry is so delicately touched, that it took nothing from the self-satisfaction which the critic who heard it, had in his own merit, or the audience in their charity. In a word, this benevolent irony is prosecuted with so masterly a hand, that the Poet supposed, had Dennis himself the wit to see it, he would have had the ingenuity to approve of it.

" This dreaded Sat'rist, Dennis will confess,
Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress." *Warburton.*

Ver. 7. *Was there a Chief, &c.*] The fine figure of the Commander in that capital picture of Belisarius at Chiswick, supplied the Poet with this beautiful idea. *Warburton.*

Dennis, who long had warr'd with modern *Huns*,
Their Quibbles routed, and defy'd their Puns;
A desp'rate *Bulwark*, sturdy, firm, and fierce
Against the *Gothic* Sons of frozen verse:
How chang'd from him who made the boxes groan,
And shook the Stage with Thunders all his own!
Stood up to dash each vain PRETENDER'S hope,
Maul the French Tyrant, or pull down the Pope!
If there's a *Briton* then, true bred and born,
Who holds Dragoons and wooden shoes in scorn;
If there's a Critic of distinguish'd rage;
If there's a Senior, who contemns this age;
Let him to-night his just assistance lend,
And be the *Critic's*, *Briton's*, *Old Man's* Friend.

NOTES.

Ver. 12. *Their Quibbles routed, and defy'd their Puns;*] An old gentleman of the last century, who used to frequent Button's coffee-house, told me they had many pleasant scenes of Dennis's indignation and resentment, when Steele and Rowe, in particular, teazed him with a pun. *Warton.*

Ver. 13. *A desp'rate Bulwark, &c.*] Alluding to his hatred of rhyme. *Warton.*

Dr. WARTON thinks that much "bitter satire is concealed under these topics of commiseration." If sarcasms were intended upon such an occasion, they were as ill-timed as they were cruel. I perceive nothing bitter, but a good humoured smile, on poor Dennis's favourite topics. Hard, indeed, must be the heart, that could strike a blow at a fallen enemy, disarmed and poor, under the shew of pity and generosity. I dare say, the old man heard the Prologue, not only with complacency but with delight. It is added, that Mallet and Thomson interested themselves much in procuring him a good benefit. *Bowles.*

EPILOGUE

TO

MR. ROWE'S JANE SHORE.

DESIGNED FOR MRS. OLDFIELD.

THE Epilogue to Jane Shore is written with that air of gallantry and raillery which, by a strange perversion of taste, the audience expects in all Epilogues to the most serious and pathetic pieces. To recommend cuckoldom, and palliate adultery, is their usual intent. I wonder Mrs. Oldfield was not suffered to speak it; for it is superior to that which was used on the occasion. In this taste Garrick has written some that abound in spirit and drollery. Rowe's genius was rather delicate and soft, than strong and pathetic; his compositions soothe us with a tranquil and tender sort of complacency, rather than cleave the heart with pangs of commiseration. His distresses are entirely founded on the passion of love. His diction is extremely elegant and chaste, and his versification highly melodious. His plays are declamations, rather than dialogues; and his characters are general, and undistinguished from each other. Such a furious character as that of Bajazet, is easily drawn; and, let me add, easily acted. There is a want of unity in the fable of Tamerlane. The death's head, dead body, and stage hung in mourning, in the Fair Penitent, are artificial and mechanical methods of affecting an audience. In a word, his plays are musical and pleasing poems, but inactive and unmoving tragedies. This of Jane Shore is, I think, the most interesting and affecting of any he has given us; but probability is sadly violated in it by the neglect of the unity of time. For a person to be supposed to be starved, during the representation of five acts, is a striking instance of the absurdity of this violation.

It is probable that this is become the most popular and pleasing tragedy of all Rowe's works, because it is founded on our own history. I cannot forbear wishing, that our writers would more frequently search for subjects in the annals of England, which afford many striking and pathetic events, proper for the stage. We have been too long attached to Grecian and Roman stories. In truth, *domestica facta* are more interesting, as well as more

useful; more interesting, because we all think ourselves concerned in the actions and fates of our countrymen; more useful, because the characters and manners bid the fairest to be true and natural, when they are drawn from models with which we are exactly acquainted. The Turks, the Persians, and Americans, of our poets, are, in reality, distinguished from Englishmen, only by their turbans and feathers; and think and act as if they were born and educated within the Bills of Mortality. The historical plays of Shakespear are always grateful to the spectator, who loves to see and hear our own Harrys and Edwards, better than all the Achilleses or Cæsars that ever existed. In the choice of a domestic story, however, much judgment and circumspection must be exerted, to select one of a proper æra; neither of too ancient, or of too modern a date. The manners of times very ancient, we shall be apt to falsify, as those of the Greeks and Romans. And recent events, with which we are thoroughly acquainted, are deprived of the power of impressing solemnity and awe, by their notoriety and familiarity. Age softens and wears away all those disgracing and depreciating circumstances, which attend modern transactions, merely because they are modern. Lucan was much embarrassed by the proximity of the times he treated of.

I take this occasion to observe, that Rowe has taken the fable of his Fair Penitent, from the Fatal Dowry of Massinger and Field.

Warton.

These observations are in general very just, but Dr. Warton should not have cited Shakespear, as having founded his most interesting plays on "domestica facta." Who ever read Julius Cæsar, without sympathy and interest? Who ever read, without a tear, the passage where Brutus, after his disagreement with Cassius, speaks of his wife's death? Who is not a partaker of his griefs, and fortunes? In truth, Genius can *make* at all times a "Cæsar," as interesting as an "Edward, or Henry." *Bowles.*

This last remark is indisputably true, and ought not to pass unobserved by those who contend, that the excellence of the poet chiefly depends on the nature of the subject.

PRODIGIOUS this! the Frail-one of our Play
From her own Sex should mercy find to-day!

You might have held the pretty head aside,
Peep'd in your fans, been serious, thus, and cry'd,
The Play may pass—but that strange creature, Shore,
I can't—indeed now—I so hate a whore—
Just as a blockhead rubs his thoughtless skull,
And thanks his stars he was not born a fool;
So from a sister sinner you shall hear,
"How strangely you expose yourself, my dear!"
But let me die, all raillery apart,
Our sex are still forgiving at their heart;
And, did not wicked custom so contrive,
We'd be the best, good-natur'd things alive.
There are, 'tis true, who tell another tale,
That virtuous ladies envy while they rail;
Such rage without betrays the fire within;
In some close corner of the soul, they sin;
Still hoarding up, most scandalously nice,
Amidst their virtues a reserve of vice.
The godly dame, who fleshly failings damns,
Scolds with her maid, or with her chaplain crams.
Would you enjoy soft nights and solid dinners?
Faith, gallants, board with saints, and bed with sinners;
Well, if our Author in the Wife offends,
He has a Husband that will make amends:
He draws him gentle, tender, and forgiving,
And sure such kind good creatures may be living.
In days of old, they pardon'd breach of vows,
Stern Cato's self was no relentless spouse:

Plu— Plutarch, what's his name, that writes his life?
Tells us, that Cato dearly lov'd his Wife:
Yet if a friend, a night or so, should need her,
He'd recommend her as a special breeder.
To lend a wife, few here would scruple make,
But, pray, which of you all would take her back?
Tho' with the Stoic Chief our stage may ring,
The Stoic Husband was the glorious thing.
The man had courage, was a sage, 'tis true,
And lov'd his country,—but what's that to you?
Those strange examples ne'er were made to fit ye,
But the kind cuckold might instruct the City:
There, many an honest man may copy Cato,
Who ne'er saw naked sword, or look'd in Plato.
If, after all, you think it a disgrace,
That Edward's Miss thus perks it in your face;
To see a piece of failing flesh and blood,
In all the rest so impudently good;
Faith, let the modest matrons of the town
Come here in crouds, and stare the strumpet down.

NOTES.

Ver. 44. *Who ne'er saw*] A sly and oblique stroke on the suicide of Cato; which was one of the reasons, as I have been informed, why this epilogue was not spoken. *Warton.*

Ver. 46. *Edward's Miss*] Sir Thomas More says, she had one accomplishment uncommon in a woman of that time; she could read and write. *Warton.*

THOMSON, in his Epilogue to Tancred and Sigismunda, severely censures the flippancy and gaiety of modern Epilogues, as contrary to those impressions intended to be left on the mind by a well-written Tragedy. The last new part Mrs. Oldfield took in tragedy was in Thomson's Sophonisba; and it is recorded that she spoke the following line,

Not one base word of Carthage for thy soul,

in so powerful a manner, that Wilkes, to whom it was addressed, was astonished and confounded. Mrs. Oldfield was admitted to visit in the best families. George II. and Queen Caroline, when Princess of Wales, condescended sometimes to converse with her at their levees. And one day the Princess asked her, if she was married to General Churchill? "So it is said, may it please your Highness, but we have not owned it yet." Her Lady Betty Modish and Lady Townly have never yet been equalled. She was universally allowed to be well-bred, sensible, witty, and generous. She gave poor Savage an annual pension of fifty pounds; and it is strange that Dr. Johnson seems rather to approve of Savage's having never celebrated his benefactress in any of his poems. *Warton.*

Mrs. Oldfield must have had an uncommon degree of effrontery if she could have been prevailed on to speak the foregoing Epilogue. She probably declined it from a sense of the additional impropriety it would acquire by her delivery of it.

"Lamented Oldfield! who with grace and ease
Could join the arts to ruin and to please."

MISCELLANIES.

MISCELLANIES.

OCCASIONED BY SOME VERSES OF HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.*

Muse, 'tis enough; at length thy labour ends
And thou shalt live, for Buckingham commends.
Let crowds of critics now my verse assail,
Let Dennis write, and nameless numbers rail;
This more than pays whole years of thankless pain,
Time, health, and fortune, are not lost in vain.
Sheffield approves; consenting Phœbus bends;
And I and malice from this hour are friends.

NOTES.

* The verses referred to, are the first among the Commendatory Poems in the preceding volume.

MACER:

A CHARACTER.

When simple *Macer*, now of high renown,
First sought a Poet's Fortune in the Town,
'Twas all th' ambition his high soul could feel,
To wear red stockings, and to dine with *Steele*.
Some ends of verse his betters might afford,
And gave the harmless fellow a good word.
Set up with these, he ventur'd on the Town,
And with a borrow'd Play, out-did poor *Crown*.
There he stopp'd short, nor since has writ a tittle,
But has the wit to make the most of little:

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *When simple Macer,*] Said to be the character of James Moore Smith, author of the Rival Modes, a comedy, in 1726. He pilfered verses from Pope. He joined in a political paper with the Duke of Wharton, called The Inquisitor, written with such violence against government, that he was soon obliged to drop it. This character was first printed in the Miscellanies of Swift and Pope 1727. *Warton.*

Dr. Warton thinks this character was intended for J. Moore Smith; but it seems to me more likely that Phillips, Pope's redoubted rival in Pastoral, was intended. My reasons for thinking so are, he is elsewhere called *lean* Phillips,

" *Lean* Phillips and fat Johnson."

" Macer" certainly alludes to this. He began his literary career with worshipping " Steele" and Addison. He " *borrow'd*" a play from Voltaire, the Distrest Mother; " *Simplicity,*" is applied to the " Pastorals," and " Translated Suit," to the translation of the Persian Tales:

" And turns a Persian tale for half-a-crown!" *Bowles.*

Like stunted hide-bound Trees, that just have got
Sufficient Sap at once to bear and rot.
Now he begs Verse, and what he gets commends,
Not of the Wits his foes, but Fools his friends.
So some coarse Country Wench, almost decay'd,
Trudges to town, and first turns Chambermaid;
Aukward and supple, each devoir to pay;
She flatters her good Lady twice a day;
Thought wond'rous honest, tho' of mean degree,
And strangely lik'd for her *Simplicity:*
In a translated Suit, then tries the Town,
With borrow'd Pins, and Patches not her own:
But just endur'd the winter she began,
And in four months a batter'd Harridan.
Now nothing left, but wither'd, pale, and shrunk,
To bawd for others, and go shares with Punk.

TO MR. JOHN MOORE,

AUTHOR OF THE CELEBRATED WORM-POWDER.

How much, egregious *Moore*, are we
  Deceiv'd by shews and forms!
Whate'er we think, whate'er we see,
  All Humankind are Worms.

Man is a very Worm by birth,
  Vile reptile, weak, and vain!
A while he crawls upon the earth,
  Then shrinks to earth again.

That Woman is a Worm, we find
  E'er since, our Grandame's evil,
She first convers'd with her own kind,
  That ancient Worm, the Devil.

The Learn'd themselves we Book-worms name,
  The Blockhead is a Slow-worm;
The Nymph whose tail is all on flame,
  Is aptly term'd a Glow-worm.

The Fops are painted Butterflies,
  That flutter for a day;
First from a Worm they take their rise,
  And in a Worm decay.

The Flatterer an Earwig grows;
  Thus Worms suit all conditions;
Misers are Muck-worms, Silk-worms Beaus,
  And Death-watches Physicians.

That Statesmen have the Worm, is seen,
  By all their winding play;
Their Conscience is a Worm within,
  That gnaws them night and day.

Ah *Moore!* thy skill were well employ'd,
  And greater gain would rise,
If thou couldst make the Courtier void
  The worm that never dies!

O learned Friend of *Abchurch-Lane,*
  Who sett'st our entrails free!
Vain is thy Art, thy Powder vain,
  Since Worms shall eat ev'n thee.

Our Fate thou only canst adjourn
  Some few short years, no more!
Ev'n *Button*'s Wits to Worms shall turn,
  Who Maggots were before.

SONG,

BY A PERSON OF QUALITY.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1733.

I.

FLUTT'RING spread thy purple pinions,
Gentle Cupid, o'er my Heart;
I a Slave in thy dominions;
Nature must give way to Art.

II.

Mild *Arcadians*, ever blooming,
Nightly nodding o'er your flocks,
See my weary days consuming,
All beneath yon flow'ry rocks.

III.

Thus the *Cyprian* Goddess weeping,
Mourn'd *Adonis*, darling youth:
Him the Boar, in Silence creeping,
Gor'd with unrelenting tooth.

IV.

Cynthia, tune harmonious numbers;
Fair *Discretion*, string the Lyre;
Soothe my ever-waking slumbers;
Bright *Apollo*, lend thy choir.

V.

Gloomy *Pluto*, King of Terrors,
Arm'd in adamantine chains,
Lead me to the crystal mirrors,
Wat'ring soft Elysian plains.

VI.

Mournful Cypress, verdant Willow,
Gilding my *Aurelia*'s brows,
Morpheus, hov'ring o'er my pillow,
Hear me pay my dying vows.

VII.

Melancholy, smooth *Mæander*,
Swiftly purling in a round,
On thy margin Lovers wander,
With thy flow'ry chaplets crown'd.

VIII.

Thus when *Philomela*, drooping,
Softly seeks her silent mate,
See the Bird of *Juno* stooping;
Melody resigns to Fate.

It is remarkable, that this song imposed upon one of Pope's professed Commentators, the late learned Gilbert Wakefield, who took it for a serious composition: "It appears," he says, "disjointed and obscure," and asks, in reference to the fourth verse, "what is the propriety of this observation? and what its application to the present subject?" On this occasion Mr. Toulmin, a friend of Mr. Wakefield's, addressed to him a copy of verses, which Mr. Wakefield,

with a good-humoured confession of his mistake, has printed in the subsequent volume of his Observations on Pope, 8vo. 1769, conceiving that " they will form an agreeable termination of his Preface."

" Watchful Wakefield, late and early
Slumbering o'er the page of Pope,
Wit has caught her critic fairly,
Twisting sand into a rope," &c.

But perhaps the most solemn and successful imposition that ever was practised on an inconsiderate reader, is the *Ode on Science;* printed (as is also the Love Song by a person of quality) in Pope and Swift's Miscellanies; and which, like that, to judge from the style, is not unlikely to have been the work of Pope.

ODE ON SCIENCE.

O, Heavenly born! in deepest dells
If fairest Science ever dwells
Beneath the mossy cave;
Indulge the verdure of the woods,
With azure beauty gild the floods,
And flow'ry carpets lave.

For melancholy ever reigns
Delighted in the sylvan scenes
With scientific light;
While Dian, huntress of the vales,
Seeks lulling sounds and fanning gales,
Though wrapt from mortal sight.

Yet, Goddess, yet the way explore
With magic rites and heathen lore
Obstructed and depress'd;
Till Wisdom give the sacred Nine,
Untaught, not uninspir'd, to shine
By reason's power redress'd.

When Solon and Lycurgus taught
To moralize the human thought
Of mad opinion's maze,
To erring zeal they gave new laws,
Thy charms, O Liberty, the cause
That blends congenial rays.

Bid bright Astræa gild the morn,
Or bid a hundred suns be born,
To hecatomb the year;
Without thy aid, in vain the poles,
In vain the zodiac system rolls
In vain the lunar sphere.

Come, fairest princess of the throng,
Bring sweet philosophy along
In metaphysic dreams;
While raptur'd bards no more behold
A vernal age of purer gold,
In Heliconian streams.

Drive Thraldom with malignant hand,
To curse some other destin'd land,
By Folly led astray;
Ierne bear on azure wing,
Energic let her soar, and sing
Thy universal sway.

So when Amphion bade the lyre
To more majestic sound aspire,
Behold the madding throng,
In wonder and oblivion drown'd,
To sculpture turn'd by magic sound
And petrifying song!

ON A CERTAIN LADY AT COURT.

I KNOW the thing that's most uncommon;
(Envy be silent, and attend!)
I know a reasonable Woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a Friend.

Not warp'd by Passion, aw'd by Rumour,
Not grave through Pride, or gay through Folly,
An equal Mixture of good Humour,
And sensible soft Melancholy.

"Has she no faults then, (Envy says,) Sir?"
Yes, she has one, I must aver;
When all the World conspires to praise her,
The Woman's deaf, and does not hear.

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *I know the thing*] Equal in elegance to any compliment that Waller has paid to Saccharissa, especially the last stanza, and the answer to Envy. The Lady addrest was Mrs. Howard, of Marble-hill, bed-chamber woman to Queen Caroline, and afterwards Countess of Suffolk. *Warton.*

ON HIS GROTTO AT TWICKENHAM,

COMPOSED OF

MARBLES, SPARS, GEMS, ORES, AND MINERALS.

THOU who shalt stop, where *Thames'* translucent wave
Shines a broad Mirror through the shadowy Cave;
Where ling'ring drops from min'ral Roofs distil,
And pointed Crystals break the sparkling Rill,
Unpolish'd Gems no ray on Pride bestow,
And latent Metals innocently glow:
Approach. Great NATURE studiously behold!
And eye the Mine without a wish for Gold.
Approach: But awful! Lo! the Aegerian Grot,
Where, nobly pensive, ST. JOHN sate and thought;

NOTES.

On his Grotto] The improving and finishing his Grot was the favourite amusement of his declining years; and the beauty of his poetic genius, in the disposition and ornaments of this romantic recess, appears to as much advantage as in his best contrived Poems. *Warburton.*

Ver. 8. *eye the Mine*]

" Aurum irrepertum, et sic melius situm
Cum terra celet." Horat. l. 3. od. 3.

VARIATIONS.

After Ver. 6. in the MS.

You see that Island's wealth, where, only free,
Earth to her entrails feels not Tyranny.

i. e. Britain is the only place in the globe which feels not tyranny even to its very entrails. *Warburton.*

Where *British* sighs from dying WYNDHAM stole,
And the bright flame was shot through MARCHMONT'S Soul.

NOTES.

Ver. 9. *Aegerian Grot.*] These are two charming lines; but are blemished by two bad rhymes, *Grot to Thought;* scarce excusable in so short a poem, in which every syllable ought to be correct.

It is remarkable that Juvenal, having mentioned this celebrated cave, takes occasion to inveigh against artificial grotto-work, and adulterating the simple beauties of nature, in lines uncommonly poetical:

"In vallem Ægeriæ descendimus, et Speluncas
Dissimiles veris; quanto præstantius esset
Numen aquæ, viridi si margine clauderit undas
Herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora tophum."
Sat. iii. v. 17.

Milton, in an exquisite Latin poem, addressed to Salsillus, vol. ii. p. 532, has beautifully feigned that Numa is still living in this dark grove and grotto, in the perpetual enjoyment of his Ægeria.
Warton.

Ver. 10. *Where nobly pensive* ST. JOHN] Lord Bolingbroke's account of the conversations, and manner of Pope's friends passing their time in his Garden, is not uninteresting:

"All I dare promise you is, that my thoughts, in what order soever they flow, shall be communicated to you, just as they pass through my mind, just as they used to be when we *conversed together on these or any other subject,* when we *sauntered* alone, or, *as we have often done,* with good *Arbuthnot,* and the *jocose* Dean of St. Patrick, among the multiplied scenes of your little Garden."
Letter to Sir William Wyndham.
Bowles.

VARIATIONS.

Ver. 11. *Where British sighs from dying Wyndham stole,*] In his MS. it was thus:

To Wyndham's breast the patriot passions stole,

which made the whole allude to a certain anecdote of not much consequence to any but the parties concerned. *Warburton.*

Let such, such only, tread this sacred Floor,
Who dare to love their Country, and be poor.

NOTES.

Ver. 11. *dying Wyndham.*] Sir William Wyndham was a most upright and amiable man, and conscientiously attached to the exiled House of James. Born of a Tory family; "imbued," says Mr. Coxe, "from his earlier years with notions of Divine right, he uniformly opposed the succession of the House of Brunswick."

By marriage, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, with the daughter of Sir John Sydenham, of Orchard, the elder line of the ancient family of this name, from Wymondham in Norfolk, was settled at Orchard, since called Orchard Wyndham in Somersetshire. Sir William was lineally descended from this branch. He was born in the year 1686, and upon the death of his father, succeeded to the title of Baronet. He married in 1708, Lady Catherine Seymour, daughter of Charles, Duke of Somerset.

Pope's connection with him was probably owing to Lord Bolingbroke, through life his intimate friend, and with whom he kept up a constant correspondence, which was continued with his son, afterwards Earl of Egremont, till the death of Lord Bolingbroke. Under Lord Oxford's administration he was made Master of the Buck-Hounds, and was afterwards Secretary at War, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. For obvious reasons, he experienced a great reverse of fortune on the accession of George I. and was committed to the Tower in 1716. He was released under bail, and continued to be highly respected for his probity and abilities. He died in 1740. *Bowles.*

TO MR. GAY,

WHO HAD CONGRATULATED MR. POPE ON FINISHING HIS HOUSE AND GARDENS.

"Ah, friend! 'tis true—this truth you lovers know—
In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow,
In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes
Of hanging mountains, and of sloping greens:
Joy lives not here, to happier seats it flies,
And only dwells where Wortley casts her eyes.

What are the gay parterre, the chequer'd shade,
The morning bower, the ev'ning colonnade,
But soft recesses of uneasy minds,
To sigh unheard in, to the passing winds?
So the struck deer in some sequester'd part
Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart,
He, stretch'd unseen in coverts hid from day,
Bleeds drop by drop, and pants his life away."

VERBATIM FROM BOILEAU.

UN JOUR, DIT UN AUTEUR, &c.

ONCE (says an Author, where, I need not say)
Two Trav'llers found an Oyster in their way;
Both fierce, both hungry; the dispute grew strong,
While Scale in hand Dame *Justice* past along.
Before her each with clamour pleads the Laws,
Explain'd the matter, and would win the cause.
Dame *Justice* weighing long the doubtful Right,
Takes, opens, swallows it, before their sight.
The cause of strife remov'd so rarely well,
There take (says *Justice*), take ye each a *Shell*.
We thrive at *Westminster* on Fools like you:
'Twas a fat Oyster—Live in peace—Adieu.

IT will be no unuseful or unpleasing amusement to compare this translation with the original:

" Un jour, dit un Auteur, n'importe en quel chapitre,
Deux voyageurs à jeun rencontrerent une huître;
Tous deux la contestoient, lorsque dans leur chemin,
La Justice passa, la balance à la main.
Devant elle à grand bruit ils expliquent la chose;
Tous deux avec depens veulent gagner leur cause.
La Justice pesant ce droit litigieux,
Demande l'huître, l'ouvre, et l'avale à leurs yeux,
Et par ce bel arrest terminant la bataille:
Tenez voilà, dit elle, à chacun une écaille.
Des sottises d'autrui, nous vivons au palais;
Messieurs, l'huître étoit bonne. Adieu, Vivez en paix."

In the fifth, sixth, seventh, ninth, and twelfth verses, Pope is inferior to the original. *Warton.*

ANSWER

TO THE

FOLLOWING QUESTION OF MRS. HOW.

WHAT IS PRUDERY?
'Tis a Beldam,
Seen with Wit and Beauty seldom,
'Tis a fear that starts at shadows;
'Tis, (no, 'tis'n't) like Miss *Meadows.*
'Tis a Virgin hard of Feature,
Old, and void of all good-nature;
Lean and fretful, would seem wise;
Yet plays the fool before she dies.
'Tis an ugly envious Shrew,
That rails at dear *Lepell* and You.

NOTES.

Ver. 11. *That rails at dear Lepell*] Miss Lepell was one of the maids of honour to Queen Caroline, and she afterwards was married to Lord Hervey. She and Miss Mary Bellenden, mentioned in Gay's ballad, and in Pope's letters, were the ornaments of the court, for beauty, engaging manners, and amiable character. I have a MS. letter from her, written at Paris, to Lord Melcomb, which sufficiently evinces her superior understanding, and might be classed with the letters of Lady M. W. Montagu.

In Gay's ballad she is designated as,

" Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepell." *Bowles.*

In Gay's poem it is Miss *Mary Lepell* who is designated as " youth's *youngest* daughter." Lady Hervey is alluded to in the preceding line.

" Now, Hervey, fair of face, I mark full well.
With her Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepell."

TO MR. THOMAS SOUTHERN,

ON HIS BIRTH-DAY, 1742.

RESIGN'd to live, prepar'd to die,
With not one sin, but Poetry,
This day TOM'S fair account has run
(Without a blot) to eighty-one.
Kind Boyle, before his poet, lays
A table, with a cloth of bays;
And Ireland, mother of sweet singers,
Presents her Harp still to his fingers.
The feast, his tow'ring genius marks
In yonder wild goose and the larks!

NOTES.

Ver. 3. *This day Tom's*] This amiable writer lived the longest, and died one of the richest, of all our poets. In 1737, Mr. Gray, writing to a friend, says very agreeably, "We have here old Mr. Southern, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable an old man as can be, at least I persuade myself so, when I look at him, and think of Isabella and Oroonoko." He was certainly a great master of the pathetic; and in the latter part of his life became sensible of the impropriety he had been guilty of in mixing Tragedy with Comedy. He was the first play-writer that had the benefit of a third night. He told Dryden that he once had cleared seven hundred pounds by one of his plays. *Warton.*

Ver. 6. *A table,*] Mr. Southern was invited to dine on his birth-day with this nobleman (Lord Orrery), who had prepared for him the entertainment of which the bill of fare is here set down. *Warton.*

Ver. 8. *Presents her Harp*] The Harp is generally wove on the Irish linen; such as table-cloths, &c. *Warburton.*

The mushrooms shew his wit was sudden,
And for his judgment, lo a pudden!
Roast beef, tho' old, proclaims him stout,
And grace, altho' a bard, devout.
May Tom, whom heav'n sent down to raise
The price of Prologues and of Plays,
Be ev'ry birth-day more a winner,
Digest his thirty-thousandth dinner;
Walk to his grave without reproach,
And scorn a rascal in a coach.

NOTES.

Ver. 16. *The price of Prologues and of Plays,*] This alludes to a story Mr. Southern told of Mr. Dryden, about the same time, to Mr. P. and Mr. W.—When Southern first wrote for the stage, Dryden was so famous for his Prologues, that the Players would act nothing without that decoration. His usual price till then had been four guineas; but when Southern came to him for the Prologue he had bespoke, Dryden told him he must have six guineas for it; "which (said he) young man, is out of no disrespect to you, but the Players have had my goods too cheap."—We now look upon these Prologues with the same admiration that the Virtuosi do on the Apothecaries' pots painted by Raphael. *Warburton.*

TO LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

I.

In beauty, or wit,
No mortal as yet
To question your empire has dar'd;
But men of discerning
Have thought that in learning,
To yield to a Lady was hard.

II.

Impertinent schools,
With musty dull rules,
Have reading to females deny'd:
So papists refuse
The Bible to use,
Lest flocks should be wise as their guide.

III.

'Twas a woman at first,
(Indeed she was curst)
In knowledge that tasted delight,
And sages agree
The laws should decree
To the first possessor the right.

IV.

Then bravely, fair dame,
Resume the old claim,
Which to your whole sex does belong;
And let men receive,
From a second bright Eve,
The knowledge of right and of wrong.

V.

But if the first Eve
Hard doom did receive,
When only one apple had she,
What a punishment new
Shall be found out for you,
Who tasting have robb'd the whole tree?

The following Lines were sung by DURASTANTI,* *when she took her leave of the English Stage. The words were in haste put together by Mr.* POPE, *at the request of the Earl of* PETERBOROUGH.

GENEROUS, gay, and gallant nation,
Bold in arms, and bright in arts;
Land secure from all invasion,
All but Cupid's gentle darts!
From your charms, oh! who would run?
Who would leave you for the sun?

Happy soil, adieu, adieu!
Let old charmers yield to new.
In arms, in arts, be still more shining;
All your joys be still encreasing;
All your tastes be still refining;
All your jars for ever ceasing:
But let old charmers yield to new:
Happy soil, adieu, adieu!

NOTES.

* Durastanti was brought to England by Handel to sing at the Opera, 1721. She was so great a favourite at Court, that the King stood godfather to one of her children. *Bowles.*

Upon the Duke of MARLBOROUGH'S *House at Woodstock.*

Atria longè patent; sed nec cœnantibus usquam,
Nec somno locus est: quàm bene non habites!
Mart. Epig.

SEE, Sir, here's the grand approach,
This way is for his Grace's coach;
There lies the bridge, and here's the clock,
Observe the lion and the cock,
The spacious court, the colonnade,
And mark how wide the hall is made!
The chimneys are so well design'd,
They never smoke in any wind.
This gallery's contriv'd for walking,
The windows to retire and talk in;
The council-chamber for debate,
And all the rest are rooms of state.

Thanks, Sir, cry'd I, 'tis very fine,
But where d'ye sleep, or where d'ye dine?
I find by all you have been telling,
That 'tis a house, but not a dwelling.*

NOTES.

* The same idea is used by Lord Chesterfield in his Epigram on Burlington-House:

"How well you *build*, let flatt'ry tell;
And all mankind, how ill you dwell!" *Bowles.*

Verses left by Mr. POPE, *on his lying in the same Bed which* WILMOT, *the celebrated Earl of* ROCHESTER, *slept in at Adderbury, then belonging to the Duke of* ARGYLE, *July 9th*, 1739.

WITH no poetic ardour fir'd
I press the bed where Wilmot lay;
That here he lov'd, or here expir'd,
Begets no numbers grave, or gay.

Beneath thy roof, Argyle, are bred
Such thoughts as prompt the brave to lie
Stretch'd out in honour's nobler bed,
Beneath a nobler roof—the sky.

Such flames as high in patriots burn,
Yet stoop to bless a child or wife;
And such as wicked kings may mourn,
When freedom is more dear than life.

THE CHALLENGE.

A COURT BALLAD.

To the Tune of "To all you Ladies now at Land," &c.

I.

To one fair lady out of court,
And two fair ladies in,
Who think the Turk* and Pope† a sport,
And wit and love no sin;
Come these soft lines, with nothing stiff in,
To Bellenden, Lepell, and Griffin.‡
With a fa, la, la.

II.

What passes in the dark third row,
And what behind the scene,
Couches and crippled chairs I know,
And garrets hung with green;
I know the swing of sinful hack,
Where many damsels cry alack.
With a fa, la, la.

NOTES.

* Ulrick, the little Turk.
† The Author.
‡ Ladies of the Court of the Princess Caroline.

III.

Then why to courts should I repair,
Where's such ado with Townshend?
To hear each mortal stamp and swear,
And ev'ry speech with Zounds end;
To hear 'em rail at honest Sunderland,
And rashly blame the realm of Blunderland.*
With a fa, la, la.

IV.

Alas! like Schutz I cannot pun,
Like Grafton court the Germans;
Tell Pickenbourg how slim she's grown,
Like Meadows† run to sermons;
To court ambitious men may roam,
But I and Marlbro' stay at home.
With a fa, la, la.

V.

In truth, by what I can discern,
Of courtiers 'twixt you three,
Some wit you have, and more may learn
From court, than Gay or Me:
Perhaps, in time, you'll leave high diet,
To sup with us on milk and quiet.
With a fa, la, la.

NOTES.

* Ireland.

† Mentioned before in the verses to Mrs. Howe.

VI.

At Leicester-Fields, a house full high,
With door all painted green,
Where ribbons wave upon the tye,
(A Milliner I mean;)
There may you meet us three to three,
For Gay can well make two of Me.
With a fa, la, la.

VII.

But shou'd you catch the prudish itch,
And each become a coward,
Bring sometimes with you lady Rich,
And sometimes mistress Howard;
For virgins to keep chaste must go
Abroad with such as are not so.
With a fa, la, la.

VIII.

And thus, fair maids, my ballad ends;
God send the king safe landing;*
And make all honest ladies friends
To armies that are standing;
Preserve the limits of those nations,
And take off ladies limitations.
With a fa, la, la.

NOTES.

* This Ballad was written anno 1717.

NOTWITHSTANDING Pope's affected contempt of the *Court*, he was proud of the acquaintance of some of the beautiful young women belonging to it.

The Ladies mentioned in this Ballad, Pope speaks of in a letter: "I met the Prince, with all his Ladies on horseback, coming from hunting.

"Mrs. B— (Bellenden) and Mrs. L— (Lepell) took me into protection (contrary to the law against harbouring Papists), and gave me a dinner." *Bowles.*

THE THREE GENTLE SHEPHERDS.

Of gentle Philips will I ever sing,
With gentle Philips shall the valleys ring.
My numbers too for ever will I vary,
With gentle Budgell, and with gentle Carey.
Or if in ranging of the names I judge ill,
With gentle Carey and with gentle Budgell,
Oh! may all gentle bards together place ye,
Men of good hearts, and men of delicacy.
May satire ne'er befool ye, or beknave ye,
And from all wits that have a knack, God save ye.

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *Philips*] Ambrose Philips.
Ver. 4. *Budgell,*] Eustace Budgell.
Ver. 4. *Carey,*] Henry Carey.
Ver. 10. *And from all wits that have a knack,*] Curl said, that in prose he was equal to Pope, but that in verse Pope *had* merely a *particular knack.* *Bowles.*

EPIGRAM,

ENGRAVED ON THE COLLAR OF A DOG, WHICH I GAVE TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS.

I AM his Highness's Dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, Sir, whose dog are you?

The idea of this inscription is taken from Sir William Temple's "Heads designed for an Essay on Conversation."

"Mr. Grantam's Fool's reply to a great Man that asked, whose fool he was"—I am Mr. Grantam's fool—pray tell me whose fool are you?"—Vol. i. p. 311, fol. ed. 1720.

EPITAPHS.

His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere! VIRG.

THE freedom of criticism has seldom been carried to a more unjustifiable excess, than in the remarks of Dr. Johnson, originally published in a periodical work called *The Universal Visitor*, on the following Epitaphs.

When a critic divests himself of candour, there is no composition, however perfect, that may not become the subject of ridicule. That this was the case with Johnson almost every Epitaph affords a proof. At the same time it must be acknowledged, that his criticisms are intermixed with many acute and judicious remarks, which are deserving of particular notice and selection.

On the whole, it must be admitted that no subject of literary composition is so difficult as that of an Epitaph; insomuch that it would scarcely be possible to produce one of any extent, to which some substantial objection might not be made. Of this the ancients were so sensible, that they seldom attempted more, than to record the event in the most simple and impressive terms. But the more ambitious claims of modern times call for greater efforts; and every exertion of fancy, and every turn of sentiment, have been resorted to, in order to produce, from the commemoration of the dead, a more striking and beneficial effect,—consolatory, pathetic, or instructive,—on the minds of the living. That in this respect the productions of Pope are, upon the whole, equal to those of any other writer, will scarcely be denied; whilst in the polish of style, and harmonious flow of versification, they greatly excel them all.

EPITAPHS.

I.

ON CHARLES EARL OF DORSET.

IN THE CHURCH OF WITHYAM, IN SUSSEX.

DORSET, the Grace of Courts, the Muses' Pride,
Patron of Arts, and Judge of Nature, died.
The scourge of Pride, tho' sanctify'd or great,
Of Fops in Learning, and of Knaves in State:
Yet soft his Nature, tho' severe his Lay,
His Anger moral, and his Wisdom gay.
Blest Satirist! who touch'd the mean so true,
As show'd, Vice had his hate and pity too.
Blest Courtier! who could King and Country please,
Yet sacred keep his friendships, and his ease.
Blest Peer! his great Forefathers ev'ry grace
Reflecting, and reflected in his Race;
Where other BUCKHURSTS, other DORSETS shine,
And Patriots still, or Poets, deck the line.

NOTES.

DORSET, *the grace of Courts, &c.*] "The first distich of this Epitaph," says Dr. Johnson, "contains a kind of information which few would want; that the man for whom the tomb was erected, *died*. There are indeed some qualities worthy of praise ascribed to the dead, but none that were likely to exempt him from the lot of man, or incline us much to wonder that he should die."—But surely these remarks cannot prevent our perceiving

the impressive effect produced in the opening of the Epitaph, by announcing—not merely that an individual was dead—which would indeed have been an insipid truism—but that a person who had added grace to a Court, of whom the Muses were proud, who had patronized the arts, and was a Judge of nature, *was dead*; which is as much as to say, in a more concise and striking form, that the highest accomplishments of humanity cannot preserve their possessor from the common lot; a reflection eminently calculated to recall us to a due sense of the uncertainty of life, and which is in fact a beautiful imitation of the fine expression in scripture,

"*Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man this day fallen in Israel?*"

Ver. 2. *Judge of nature,*] What is meant by "Judge of nature," is not easy to say. Nature is not the object of human judgment; for it is in vain to judge where we cannot alter. If by nature is meant what is commonly called nature by the critics, a just representation of things really existing, and actions really performed, nature cannot be properly opposed to art, nature being in this sense only the best effect of art." *Johnson.*

Can we suppose that Johnson meant to say, that because it is not in our power to alter the works of nature, which is far from being in all cases true, it is of no use or advantage to us to study them, and to form the best judgment in our power respecting them? Is there any employment more suitable to us, more consistent with our true dignity, improvement and happiness, than the contemplation of the works of nature? or, in other words, of that immense universe which the Creator of all has given us faculties in a great degree to comprehend, and has offered to our inquiry and admiration? and is it not the highest honour that can be conferred on a mortal, to say that he was "a judge" of this wonderful system? When such are the observations with which the learned critic commences his remarks on these epitaphs, it will not be difficult for the reader to form an idea of the spirit in which they are, for the most part, written.

II.

ON SIR WILLIAM TRUMBAL,

One of the principal Secretaries of State to King WILLIAM III., *who having resigned his Place, died in his Retirement at Easthamsted, in Berkshire,* 1716.

A PLEASING Form; a firm, yet cautious Mind;
Sincere, tho' prudent; constant, yet resign'd:
Honour unchang'd, a Principle profest,
Fix'd to one side, but mod'rate to the rest:
An honest Courtier, yet a Patriot too;
Just to his Prince, and to his Country true:
Fill'd with the Sense of Age, the Fire of Youth,
A Scorn of Wrangling, yet a Zeal for Truth:
A gen'rous Faith, from Superstition free;
A Love to Peace, and Hate of Tyranny;
Such this Man was; who now, from earth remov'd,
At length enjoys that Liberty he lov'd.

NOTES.

Ver. 5. *a Patriot too*;] It was unsuitable to the nicety required in short compositions, to close his verse with the word *too;* every rhyme should be a word of emphasis, nor can this rule be safely neglected, except where the length of the poem makes slight inaccuracies excusable, or allows room for beauties sufficient to overpower the effects of petty faults.

At the beginning of the seventh line the word *filled* is weak and prosaic, having no particular adaptation to any of the words that follow it. *Johnson.*

Dr. Johnson further objects to this Epitaph, because the name of

of the person on whom it was written is omitted—a fault which he thinks scarcely any beauty can compensate. To this he adds, that "it is wholly without elevation, and contains nothing striking or particular, &c." The former observation seems well founded; but the many peculiarities of character enumerated in the Epitaph prevent our acceding to the latter. Dr. Warton remarks that "the whole of this epitaph is one string of antithesis throughout;" which may be admitted, without any great censure; as qualities appear stronger when placed in opposition to each other.

III.

ON THE HON. SIMON HARCOURT,

ONLY SON OF THE LORD CHANCELLOR HARCOURT,

At the Church of Stanton-Harcourt in Oxfordshire,

1720.

To this sad Shrine, whoe'er thou art! draw near,
Here lies the Friend most lov'd, the Son most dear:
Who ne'er knew Joy, but Friendship might divide,
Or gave his Father Grief but when he died.

How vain is Reason, Eloquence how weak!
If *Pope* must tell what HARCOURT cannot speak.
Oh let thy once-lov'd Friend inscribe thy Stone,
And, with a Father's sorrows mix his own!

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *To this sad shrine,*] This Epitaph is principally remarkable for the artful introduction of the name; which is inserted with a peculiar felicity, to which chance must concur with genius; which

which no man can hope to attain twice, and which cannot be copied but with servile imitation.

I cannot but wish that of this inscription, the two last lines had been omitted, as they take away from the energy what they do not add to the sense. *Johnson.*

Ver. 4. *but when he died*] These were the very words used by Louis XIV. when his Queen died, 1683; though it is not to be imagined they were copied by Pope. Such coincidences in writers are not uncommon. *Warton.*

IV.

ON JAMES CRAGGS,* ESQ.

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY.

JACOBUS CRAGGS,
REGNI MAGNÆ BRITANNIÆ A SECRETIS
ET CONSILIIS SANCTIORIBUS,
PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPULI AMOR ET DELICIÆ:
VIXIT TITULIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR
ANNOS, HEU PAUCOS, XXXV.
OB. FEB. XIV. MDCCXX.

Statesman, yet Friend to Truth! of Soul sincere,
In Action faithful, and in Honour clear!

NOTES.

* He was the only son of James Craggs, who has been before mentioned. He had his education at a French seminary in Chelsea; from thence he went to Hanover, thence to the Court of Turin. He removed to Barcelona, and in the absence of Lord Stanhope, he afterwards served as Under-Minister to the Emperor. Upon the death of Queen Ann, he was sent to Hanover, for which he was made, by the assistance of the Duke of Marlborough, Cofferer to the Prince, and afterwards Principal Secretary of State.

Who broke no Promise, serv'd no private End,
Who gain'd no Title, and who lost no Friend,
Ennobl'd by Himself, by All approv'd,
Prais'd, wept, and honour'd, by the Muse he lov'd.

NOTES.

State. Considering the violent state of parties, no one had fewer enemies. His generosity, good-nature, pleasing manners, and liberal heart, were acknowledged by all. Though the friend of Addison, and raised by the Whigs, yet his manly generosity to Pope is well-known. The only thing that has appeared to cast a momentary shade, if I may so say, on his character, was his connection with the unfortunate South-Sea business. According to the Committee of Secrecy, no less a sum than 36,000*l.* fictitious stock was held for him and his father. Upon the great alarm and subsequent distress of the public, the elder Craggs died suddenly, not without suspicion that he had hastened his own dissolution. Possibly the violent agitation of his spirits produced a fever, which terminated fatally. The late Lord Orford informed Mr. Coxe, that he had an interview with Sir Robert Walpole, just at the time of the rupture of the scheme, and he appeared in such a state of violent agitation and distress, that Sir Robert expressed little surprise when he heard afterwards of his death. He left three daughters, all married, and connected with families whose descendants are at this day as high in station, as most amiable in life.

Craggs, notwithstanding he was a pleasant companion, and a particular favourite, it is said, with the Ladies, was very attentive to business. I have a letter now before me, from Methuen to Doddington, in which he says, "Mr. Walpole minds his hunting "in Norfolk, but Mr. Secretary Craggs, and your humble servant, "with some few of his brethren of the Privy Council, stick close "to business."

"October 27."

Johnson with justice objects to an Epitaph, partly in Latin, and partly in English. *Bowles.*

Ver 1. *Statesman, yet Friend to Truth!*] These verses were originally the conclusion of the Epistle to Mr. Addison on his Dialogue on Medals, and were adapted as an Epitaph by an alteration in the last line, which in the Epistle stood—

"And

" And prais'd unenvied by the Muse he lov'd."

Johnson's principal objection to this Epitaph is, what he denominates the absurdity of joining in the same inscription, Latin and English, or verse and prose. " Such an epitaph," says he, " resembles the conversation of a foreigner, who tells part of his meaning by words, and conveys part by signs."

No censure can prevent these lines from being considered as a manly, eloquent, and affectionate tribute to the memory of the person whose character they perpetuate.

V.

ON MR. ROWE,

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY.

THY Reliques, ROWE! to this sad shrine we trust,
And near thy SHAKESPEAR place thy honour'd bust,
Oh, next him, skill'd to draw the tender tear,
For never heart felt passion more sincere;
To nobler sentiment to fire the brave,
For never BRITON more disdain'd a slave.
Peace to thy gentle shade, and endless rest;
Blest in thy genius, in thy love too blest!
And blest, that timely from our scene remov'd,
Thy soul enjoys the liberty it lov'd.

To these, so mourn'd in death, so lov'd in life!
The childless parent, and the widow'd wife,
With tears inscribes this monumental stone,
That holds their ashes and expects her own.

NOTES.

The following is the Epitaph as it was originally written; but which

which was afterwards altered for the Monument in the Abbey, erected to Rowe and his Daughter:—

Thy Reliques, Rowe, to this fair Urn we trust,
And sacred, place by Dryden's awful dust:
Beneath a rude and nameless stone he lies,
To which thy Tomb shall guide inquiring eyes.
Peace to thy gentle shade, and endless rest!
Blest in thy Genius, in thy Love too blest!
One grateful Woman to thy fame supplies
What a whole thankless land to his denies.

Ver. 3. *Beneath a rude*] The tomb of Mr. Dryden was erected upon this hint by the Duke of Buckingham; to which was originally intended this Epitaph:

"This Sheffield rais'd. The sacred dust below,
Was Dryden once: The rest who does not know?"

which the Author since changed into the plain inscription now upon it, being only the name of that great Poet:

J. DRYDEN.
Natus Aug. 9, 1631. Mortuus Maij 1, 1700.
JOANNES SHEFFIELD DUX BUCKINGHAMIENSIS POSUIT. *P.*

VI.

ON MRS. CORBET,*

WHO DIED OF A CANCER IN HER BREAST.

Here rests a Woman, good without pretence,
Blest with plain Reason, and with sober Sense;

NOTES.

* I have always considered this as the most valuable of Pope's Epitaphs; the subject of it is a character not discriminated by any shining or eminent peculiarities, yet that which really makes, though not the splendour, the felicity of life.

Domestic virtue, as it is exerted without great occasions, or conspicuous

No Conquest she, but o'er herself, desir'd,
No Arts essay'd, but not to be admir'd.
Passion and Pride were to her soul unknown,
Convinc'd that Virtue only is our own.
So unaffected, so compos'd a mind;
So firm, yet soft; so strong, yet so refin'd;
Heav'n, as its purest gold, by tortures try'd!
The Saint sustain'd it, but the Woman dy'd.

NOTES.

conspicuous consequences, in an even unnoted tenor, required the genius of Pope to display it in such a manner as might attract regard, and enforce reverence. Who can forbear to lament that this amiable woman has no name in the verses? *Johnson.*

VII.

On the Monument of the Honourable ROBERT DIGBY, *and of his Sister* MARY, *erected by their Father the Lord* DIGBY, *in the Church of Sherborne in Dorsetshire,* 1727.

Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modest wisdom, and pacific truth:
Compos'd in suff'rings, and in joy sedate,
Good without noise, without pretension great.
Just of thy word, in ev'ry thought sincere,
Who knew no wish but what the world might hear:
Of softest manners, unaffected mind,
Lover of peace, and friend of human kind:

Go live! for Heav'n's Eternal year is thine,
Go, and exalt thy Moral to Divine.
And thou, blest Maid! attendant on his doom,
Pensive hast follow'd to the silent tomb,
Steer'd the same course to the same quiet shore,
Not parted long, and now to part no more!
Go then, where only bliss sincere is known!
Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!

NOTES.

Ver. 11. *And thou, blest Maid!*] Mr. Robert Digby, third son of Lord Digby, who is yet remembered with respect at Sherborne, died of a consumption, and was soon after followed by the amiable and affectionate sister, who hung over his sick bed. The following letter from her sister to Pope, on the subject of their brother's illness, is in the British Museum, with part of the translation of the Odyssey on the back of it:

" Dear Sir, *Sherborne, July* 18, 1724.

" I am sure this will want no excuse to you, and it carries good news of a friend. My brother has not had any fit of his ague since Sunday; he has slept a little every night, but with some interruptions by the cramp. Last night he began to drink asses' milk, which had its usual effect, in giving him a good night's rest, and free from pain. I am, dear Sir, in great haste, but with great truth, your friend and servant, E. Digby.

" All here are your servants." *Bowles.*

My father, who was an intimate friend and contemporary at Magdalen College, Oxford, with Mr. Robert Digby, was always saying that this excellent character was not over-drawn, and had every virtue in it here enumerated; and that Mr. Digby had more of the mitis sapientia, as Horace finely expresses it, than any man he had ever known. The same said the amiable Mr. Holdsworth, author of Muscipula. They were all three pupils of Dr. Sacheverell, who at that time was the friend of Addison, and was in great vogue as an able tutor, before he entered so violently into those absurd politics that so much disgraced him. *Warton.*

Yet take these Tears, Mortality's relief,
And till we share your joys, forgive our grief:
These little rites, a Stone, a Verse receive;
'Tis all a Father, all a Friend can give!

VIII.

ON SIR GODFREY KNELLER,

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY, 1723.

KNELLER, by Heav'n and not a Master taught,
Whose Art was Nature, and whose Pictures Thought;
Now for two Ages having snatch'd from fate
Whate'er was beauteous, or whate'er was great,
Lies crown'd with Princes' honours, Poets' lays,
Due to his Merit, and brave Thirst of Praise.

Living, great Nature fear'd he might outvie
Her works; and, dying, fears herself may die.

NOTES.

Ver. 7. *Living, great Nature*] Much better translated by Mr. W. Harrison, of New College, a favourite of Swift, communicated to me by Dr. Lowth:

"Here Raphael lies, by whose untimely end
Nature both lost a rival and a friend."

Notwithstanding the partiality of Pope, this artist little deserved to

IMITATIONS.

Ver. 7. Imitated from the famous Epitaph on Raphael.

"Raphael, timuit, quo sospite, vinci
Rerum magna parens, et moriente, mori." *P.*

to be consulted by our Poet, as he was, concerning the arrangement of the subjects represented on the shield of Achilles. These required a genius of a higher order. Mr. Flaxman, lately arrived from Italy, by a diligent study of the antique, and the force of his genius, has given designs from Homer far beyond any that have yet appeared. *Warton.*

There are some very good pictures by Kneller, at Donhead Hall, near Shaftesbury, Wilts, the seat of his descendant John Kneller, Esq. particularly a St. Cecilia, and the Conversion of St. Paul; his natural daughter is painted in the character of Cecilia, which, in action and attitude, is very like that of the late Mrs. Sheridan, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. I should have imagined Sir Joshua must have seen it, or perhaps a copy of it. There is a painting by Sir Godfrey, at Donhead Hall, of Pope.

I take this opportunity of explaining a ridiculous anecdote, which Warton has admitted of Kneller's vanity. Walpole has related it in this manner: "Sir Godfrey," says Pope, "*if God had consulted* you, the world would have been made more perfect." "'Fore God," replies Kneller, "*I think so.*" Now the real story is this: When Pope, with an affected and pert superiority, said, "If Sir *Godfrey had been consulted*, the world would have *been made more perfect*;" Kneller immediately turned the laugh upon Pope, by looking at his diminutive person, and saying, with a good humoured smile, "*'Fore God*, there are *some little things* in it, I think I COULD *have mended.*" This is humourous and pleasant; whereas, as the *wits* have told *the story themselves*, Sir Godfrey's *stupidity* appears equal to his *vanity*. *Bowles.*

Pope had made Sir Godfrey, on his death-bed, a promise to write his Epitaph, which he seems to have performed with reluctance. He thought it "the worst thing he ever wrote in his life." *Spence's Anec.* 163. *Singer's Ed.*

IX.

ON GENERAL HENRY WITHERS,

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY, 1729.

HERE, WITHERS, rest! thou bravest, gentlest mind,
Thy Country's friend, but more of human kind.
Oh born to Arms! O Worth in Youth approv'd!
O soft Humanity, in Age belov'd!
For thee the hardy Vet'ran drops a tear,
And the gay Courtier feels the sigh sincere.

WITHERS, adieu! yet not with thee remove
Thy Martial spirit, or thy social love!
Amidst Corruption, Luxury, and Rage,
Still leave some ancient Virtues to our age:
Nor let us say (those English glories gone)
The last true Briton lies beneath this stone.

NOTES.

Here, Withers, rest!] In the early part of his life, Pope associated much with General Withers, and his friend Colonel Disney, commonly called, in Pope's correspondence, *Duke Disney*, who resided with the General at Greenwich. They are mentioned in Gay's Poem on Pope's supposed return from Greece, in the following stanza:

Now pass we Gravesend with a friendly wind,
And Tilbury's white fort, and long Blackwall;
Greenwich, where dwells the friend of human kind,
More visited than either park or hall,
WITHERS the good, and (with him ever joined)
Facetious DISNEY, greet thee first of all.
I see his chimney smoke, and hear him say,
Duke! that's the room for POPE, and that for GAY.

X.

ON MR. ELIJAH FENTON,

AT EASTHAMSTED IN BERKS, 1730.

This modest Stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest Man:
A Poet, blest beyond the Poet's fate,
Whom Heav'n kept sacred from the Proud and Great:
Foe to loud Praise, and Friend to learned Ease,
Content with Science in the Vale of Peace.

NOTES.

Ver. 9. *From Nature's temp'rate feast, &c.*] Wakefield quotes Horace:

Inde fit, ut raro qui se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore vitæ,
Cedat, uti, conviva satur, reperire queamus.

His integrity, his learning, and his genius, deserved this character; it is not in any respect over wrought. His poems are not sufficiently read and admired. The Epistle to Southerne, the Ode to the Sun, the Fair Nun, and, above all, the Ode to Lord Gower, are excellent. Akenside frequently said to me, that he thought this Ode the best in our language, next to Alexander's Feast. "I envy Fenton," said Pope to Mr. Walter Harte, "his Horatian Epistle to Lambard." Parts of Mariamne are beautiful, and it ought to take its turn on the stage. Just before he died, Fenton was introduced into Mr. Craggs' family by Pope's recommendation.

Warton.

Pope has left another character of Fenton, not inconsistent with the above. "Fenton is a right honest man. He is fat and indolent; a very good scholar; sits within, and does nothing but read, or compose."—*Spence's Anec. p.* 19. *Singer's Ed.*

Calmly he look'd on either Life, and here
Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;
From Nature's temp'rate feast rose satisfy'd,
Thank'd Heav'n that he had liv'd, and that he dy'd.

XI.

ON MR. GAY,

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY, 1732.

Of Manners gentle, of Affections mild;
In Wit, a Man; Simplicity, a Child:
With native Humour temp'ring virtuous Rage,
Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:
Above Temptation, in a low Estate,
And uncorrupted ev'n among the Great:
A safe Companion, and an easy Friend,
Unblam'd through Life, lamented in thy End.
These are thy Honours! not that here thy Bust
Is mix'd with Heroes, or with Kings thy dust;
But that the Worthy and the Good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms—*Here* lies Gay.

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *Of Manners gentle,*] "The eight first lines," says Johnson, "have no grammar: the adjectives are without any substantives, and the epithets without a subject." *Warton.*

Ver. 2. *In Wit, &c.*] This seems derived from Dryden's Elegy on Mrs. Anne Killegrew:

"Her wit was more than *man;* her innocence a *child.*"

Wakefield.

Ver. 3. *virtuous Rage,*] Silius Italicus, v. 652, has the same expression:

Virtutis sacram rabiem. *Wakefield.*

Ver.

Ver. 12. Here *lies* GAY.] i. e. in the hearts of the good and worthy.—Mr. Pope told me his conceit in this line was not generally understood. For, by peculiar ill-luck, the *formulary* expression which makes the beauty, misleads the reader into a sense which takes it quite away. *Warburton.*

The conceit in the last line is certainly very puerile, and a false thought borrowed from Crashaw:

" Entomb'd, not in this stone but in my heart."

CRASHAW, Poems, p. 94.

Warton.

XII.

INTENDED FOR SIR ISAAC NEWTON,

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY.

ISAACUS NEWTONUS:

Quem Immortalem

Testantur *Tempus, Natura, Cœlum:*

Mortalem

Hoc marmor fatetur.

Nature and Nature's Laws lay hid in Night:
GOD said, *Let Newton be!* and all was Light.

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *Nature*] The antithesis betwixt Mortalem and Immortalem is much unsuited to the subject; and the second English line, " God said, &c." borders a little on the profane. The magnificent Fiat of Moses will be always striking and admired, notwithstanding the cold objections of Le Clerc and Huet. *Warton.*

Ver. 2. *Let Newton be!*] He was born on the very day on which Galileo

Galileo died. When Ramsay was one day complimenting him on his discoveries in philosophy, he answered, as I read it in Spence's Anecdotes, "Alas! I am only like a child picking up pebbles on the shore of the great ocean of truth." *Warton.*

And all was Light.] It had been better—*and* there *was Light*—as more conformable to the reality of the fact, and to the allusion whereby it is celebrated. *Warburton.*

XIII.

ON DR. FRANCIS ATTERBURY,

BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

Who died in Exile at Paris, 1732, (his only Daughter having expired in his Arms, immediately after she arrived in France to see him).

DIALOGUE.

SHE.

YES, we have liv'd—one pang, and then we part!
May Heav'n, dear Father! now have all thy Heart.
Yet ah! how once we lov'd, remember still,
Till you are dust like me.

HE.

Dear Shade! I will:
Then mix this dust with thine—O spotless Ghost!

NOTES.

Ver. 1. *Yes, we have liv'd*—] I know not why this Dialogue should be called an Epitaph. Dr. Johnson says, "it is contemptible, and should have been suppressed for the Author's sake." I see no reason for this harsh sentence passed upon it. *Warton.*

Dr.

O more than Fortune, Friends, or Country lost!
Is there on Earth one care, one wish beside?
Yes—SAVE MY COUNTRY, HEAV'N,
—He said, and dy'd.

NOTES.

Dr. Johnson says, " the contemptible Dialogue between ' He and She,' should have been suppressed."

Many of our old Epitaphs are written *in dialogue*. In this instance, nothing could so well express the story of the Daughter and Father meeting in a foreign country, he exiled, and she dying in his arms! *Bowles.*

Ver. 9. SAVE MY COUNTRY, HEAV'N,] Alluding to the Bishop's frequent use and application of the expiring words of the famous Father Paul, in his prayer for the state, " Esto perpetua." With what propriety the Bishop applied it at his trial, and is here made to refer to it in his last moments, they will understand who know what conformity there was in the lives of the Prelate and the Monk. The character of our countryman is well known; and that of the Father may be told in very few words. He was profoundly skilled in all divine and human learning. He employed his whole life in the service of the State, against the unjust encroachments of the Church. He was modest, humble, and forgiving, candid, patient, and just; free from all prejudices of party, and all the projects of ambition; in a word, the happiest compound of science, wisdom, and virtue. *Warburton.*

This severe sarcasm would certainly, if he had seen it, been highly displeasing to Pope, who retained for Atterbury the warmest affection and respect. But from the Letters of Atterbury, printed, in three volumes, by Mr. Nicholls, and particularly from those in p. 148, to p. 168, it almost indisputably appears that the Bishop was engaged in a treasonable correspondence, and in the intrigues of the Pretender. *Warton.*

XIV.

ON EDMUND DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.*

WHO DIED IN THE NINETEENTH YEAR OF HIS AGE, 1735.

If modest Youth, with cool Reflection crown'd,
And ev'ry op'ning Virtue blooming round,
Could save a Parent's justest Pride from fate,
Or add one Patriot to a sinking state;
This weeping marble had not ask'd thy Tear,
Or sadly told, how many hopes lie here!
The living Virtue now had shone approv'd,
The Senate heard him, and his Country lov'd.
Yet softer Honours, and less noisy Fame
Attend the shade of gentle Buckingham:
In whom a Race, for Courage fam'd, and Art,
Ends in the milder Merit of the Heart;
And—Chiefs or Sages long to Britain given—
Pays the last Tribute of a Saint to Heav'n.

NOTES.

* Only son of John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, by Katherine Darnley, natural daughter of James II.

Ver. 1. *If modest Youth, &c.*] This Epitaph Mr. Warburton prefers to the rest, but I know not for what reason. To *crown* with *reflection*, is surely a mode of speech approaching to nonsense. *Opening virtues blooming round*, is something like tautology. The six following lines are poor and prosaic. *Art*, is in another place used for *arts*. The six last lines are the best, but not excellent.

Johnson.

The above Epitaph is written with a degree of feeling, which would atone for greater blemishes than Dr. Johnson has been able to point out.

XV.

FOR ONE WHO WOULD NOT BE BURIED IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY.

HEROES and Kings! your distance keep:
In peace let one poor Poet sleep,
Who never flatter'd folks like you:
Let Horace blush, and Virgil too.

ANOTHER, ON THE SAME.

UNDER this Marble, or under this Sill,
Or under this Turf, or e'en what they will;
Whatever an Heir, or a Friend in his stead,
Or any good creature shall lay o'er my head,
Lies one who ne'er car'd, and still cares not a pin
What they said, or may say, of the mortal within:
But, who living and dying, serene still and free,
Trusts in GOD, that as well as he was, he shall be.

Imitated from the following lines of Ariosto:

Ludovici Areosti humantur ossa
Sub hoc marmore, vel sub hoc humo, seu
Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres
Sive hærede benignior comes, seu
Opportunius incidens Viator:
Nam scire haud potuit futura, sed nec
Tanti erat vacuum sibi cadaver
Ut uthnam cuperet parare vivens,
Vivens ista tamen sibi paravit.
Quæ inscribi voluit suo sepulchro
Olim siquod haberetis sepulchrum.

END OF VOL. III.

J. M'Creery, Tooks Court,
Chancery Lane, London.

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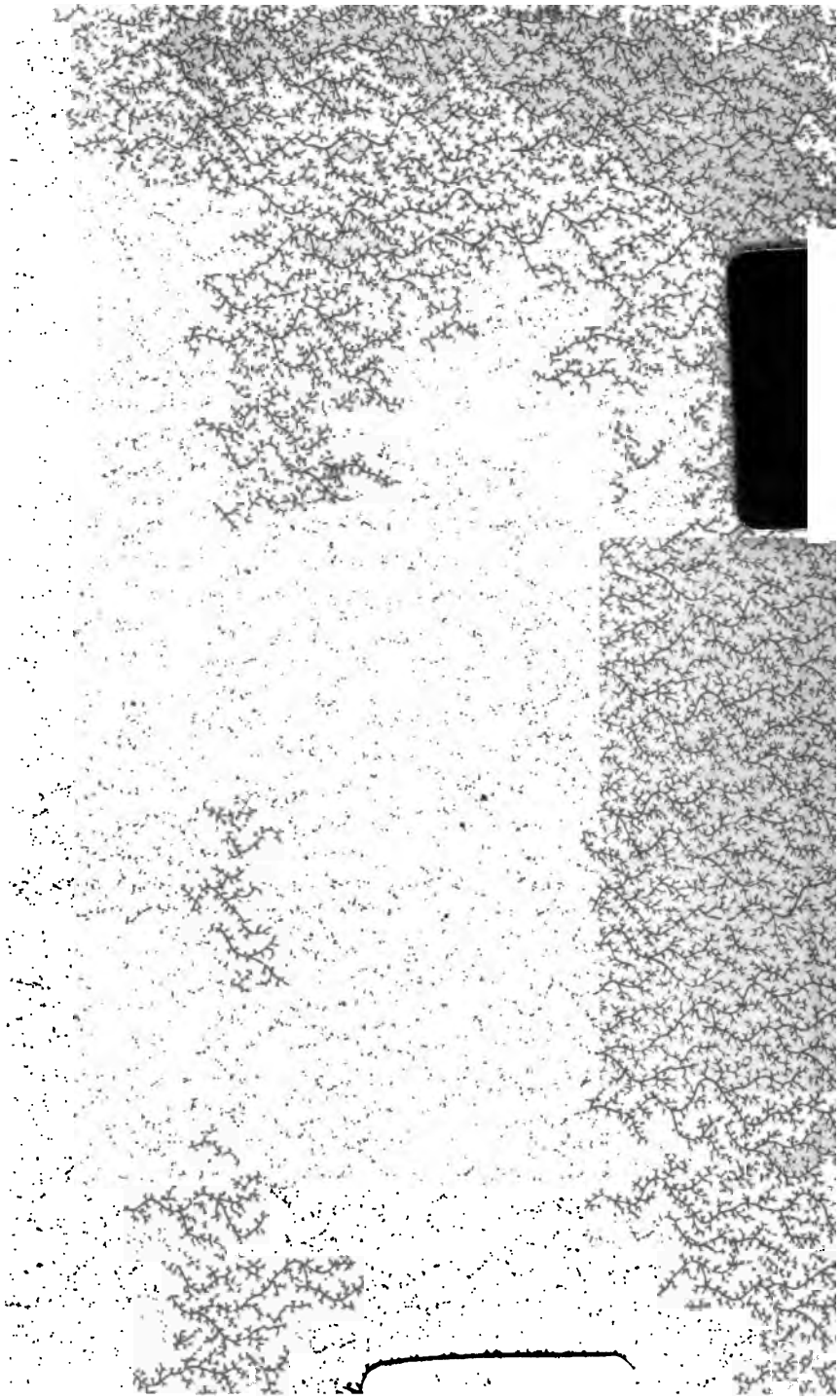
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